

SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

NEW SERIES.

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The Catechism.

Now for the Catechism. We give three months to it—July, August, and September. We publish it in *JOURNAL*, *Quarterly*, and *Berean Supplement*. It is short. It is simple. It is rich in wise and divine thought. The Church in its highest legislative body has approved it. The pastor is required to train the lambs of his fold in it. Parents promise at the baptism of their children to teach the Catechism to them. Now here it is in the third quarter of 1881 as a supplemental lesson. Give five or seven minutes a Sabbath to it. Stir up every body. Kindle a Catechism revival. Talk up its definitions and doctrines in pulpit and prayer-meeting, and let the Sunday-school, from primary to senior department, ring with it. If the Catechism be neglected in Methodist Episcopal Sunday-schools the next three months—whose fault will it be?

The L. R. U.

THE "Lyceum Reading Union," with its new course of reading in the *Sunday-School Advocate*, the *Sunday-School Classmate*, and the new, cheap, attractive *Lyceum Library*, ought to enroll every child in our Methodist Episcopal Sunday-schools over seven years of age. Our youth of seventeen and over ought to be enthusiastic over it. And if our pastors and superintendents will just now give help in words of explanation and appeal, our **L. R. U.** will be the grandest reading circle in the world.

Tract Society Day.

SHALL our great "Tract Society" have recognition in the Sunday-school, and in the congregation, by a special service and a collection on the *second Sunday of July*? What say our pastors and super-

intendents? The "service" is ready. It is simple and beautiful—a responsive service of Scripture and hymns. *Shall* the Tract Society be remembered?

The Teacher's Fish-hook—?

BY REV. B. B. LOOMIS.

THE teacher's fish-hook is the interrogation point, and upon its skillful use very largely depends his success. With his questions he angles in the scholar's mind for facts, conclusions, judgments, the stores of memory, and the results of all mental processes.

The best educators agree upon the great superiority of the "drawing out" method to the pouring in or lecture style of teaching. When the teacher does all, or nearly all, the talking, the minds of the pupils will be more or less inactive, and the younger the scholars the less active their minds under this treatment. But the mind must be active, wide awake, to be receptive. It is not like a jug, which may be poured full and will retain its contents, but rather like the hand which must grasp whatever it would hold. Hence the importance of wise and skillfully put questions. Nothing wakes up mental activity more quickly and thoroughly than a direct question. For commanding attention, for arousing curiosity, for quickening recollection, for stimulating independent thinking, and for fastening truth in the mind and upon the conscience, give us the Socratic method of question and answer, which was so largely used by the great Teacher, the Saviour himself.

The mental fish-hook, to be effective, must have some of the characteristics of its piscatorial type.

First, it must be sharp, having a point which cannot be evaded or misunderstood. Questions that are ambiguous, and may be answered in two or three different ways, are so puzzling that they seldom catch any answer at all.

Secondly, it must be barbed: it must not only

strike, but stick. The question must awaken interest, either arousing curiosity by its novelty or sounding the depths of memory, to draw therefrom something new or old.

Then, again, to be of real value it must have a close connection with the subject of study. A hook without a line catches no fish, and the closer the question is kept in the line of thought and study pursued at the hour, the more valuable the results. Then ply your scholars with apt and pertinent questions and you may, as Mr. Pardee used to say, "question" the lesson into your scholars and question it out of them again.

Methodism in the Lessons of the Third Quarter.

BY D. A. WHEDON, D.D.

IN Lessons I. and II. the fact of a divine providence over human affairs, and particularly affairs of the kingdom of God, is beautifully unfolded. Providence is supervision, or superintendence, extending sometimes to an absolute ordering and control, but never overriding the free agency of man. In material things it is absolute, as, for instance, in sending or withholding rain, as God pleases. In matters involving man's action, recognition is always made of his freedom. God's administration of his government is in accordance with a great *plan*—a plan devised by his infinite wisdom, taking into view all contingencies, and certain to accomplish the proposed result. Here comes in the doctrine of decrees. God has not, as the Calvinists vainly say, absolutely decreed whatsoever comes to pass; for that would make him the author of sin, and also free man from responsibility for wrong doing. He decreed what *he himself* would do, but has not what man shall do. At the fall in Eden, he determined to provide a Redeemer; and that purpose he steadily followed until the Redeemer came. The going down into Egypt, the seclusion and multiplication of the people, and the preservation and education of Moses, were steps in the plan. Moses was intended to be their deliverer and ruler. He had the power to refuse; but God selected him with such a foresight of his character that he knew he would not refuse.

Lesson III. shows us God revealing himself in the burning bush. It is the "angel of the Lord" who appears; but the angel declares himself to be "the God of Abraham." He is the eternal Son, who by and by became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. That he is a *personal* God is a fact clearly standing out. The fire is not God, though he so makes himself visible. He is not material, and is not to be confounded with the universe which he has made. He whose name is "*I Am*," can be none other than a living Person, eternal, and, therefore, self-existent. "There is but one living and true God," says Article I., "everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and

goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible." But the lesson shows him also in his relations to men; (1) manifesting himself, now, as fire, as he will at a later day as a man; (2) talking with man audibly, but no more surely than he does now by the Holy Ghost; (3) covenant-keeping, as he is now toward every baptized man, woman, and child; and (4) proclaiming himself the God of his faithful servants after death as truly as before. Our Lord uses the declaration of verse 6 to answer the Sadducees in Luke 20. 27-38. As materialists, they denied an immaterial and immortal soul in man, and admitted no future life. Death ends all, was their consistent creed. But, as Jesus told them, God "is not a God of the dead, [*annihilated, extinct men*,] but of the living," that is, of *existing* men. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then, continued to live after what we term death, which is nothing more or less than a separation of the soul and body. Our Lord's answer holds good for our modern Sadducees, the materialists and annihilationists of to-day.

The work of deliverance begins with miracles, as is seen in the Fifth Lesson. God had demonstrated the genuineness of Moses' call to himself, (Exod. 4. 1-77,) to Aaron, (4. 28,) and to the Hebrews, (4. 30,) by miracles, and had promised "signs" and "wonders" before Pharaoh, (7. 3.) Not every supernatural or preternatural work is a miracle. Properly speaking, that event may be so called which is wrought by divine power for the purpose of attesting a divine messenger. It was expected that Pharaoh would demand that Moses "show a miracle" (Exod. 7. 9) as his credential. The miracle thus became a "sign" and convincing proof that he who wrought it was sent by God. So the Jews believed, (John 11. 48,) and so Nicodemus confessed, John 3. 2. The Scriptures show certain eras of miracles connected with the opening of a new dispensation or an advance movement in the development of the plans of the Almighty. The Hebrew dispensation, beginning with the mission of Moses, was miraculous; so was the Christian, beginning with the incarnation of the Son of God. That God can work a miracle, or enable a man to work one, must be confessed by all who believe him to be the Almighty. That he has done so is a simple matter of history as well attested as other historical events which are universally accepted. And modern scientists ought to remember that he who established the laws under which he proposed to govern the world, has never put himself under bondage to them.

The Christian Church has two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, answering to the two, circumcision and the passover, of the Hebrew Church. The latter we have in Lesson VI. It was a sacrament of redemption from bondage, and of redemption by blood, as also is the Lord's Supper. The paschal lamb was a true type of the chosen Lamb of God. "Christ, our Passover," says St. Paul, "is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5. 7.) The point which we here emphasize is the all essential one of *redemption by blood*, so often found, not only

in the Old Testament where special bloody sacrifices are ordained, but especially in the New Testament where spiritual worship is so urgently insisted on. Only by Christ's blood is there cleansing from sin. He "made, by his oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." (Ritual.)

The giving of the ten commandments on Mount Sinai by the voice of God is the subject of Lessons IX. and X. Methodism teaches (Article VI) that "although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral." The Mosaic ritual was a shadow of which the substance was Christ, and was of force only until his death. The Jewish civil polity was designed only for that people and that country, and really ended before Christ's time. But the moral law, as contained in the Decalogue, was given for all men and for all time. Its author was God, the Universal King. Its precepts cover the relations of man to his God, and of man to his fellow-man, irrespective of age, circumstance, or condition. As a code of morals, it is perfect: nothing can be added to it or taken from it without impairing it. Its requirements are precisely what the heart that is pervaded by perfect love to God and man will delight to render, and so "love is the fulfilling of the law," but not a substitute for it. Moreover, if any one think, as some have thought, that Christ abolished the moral law, let him remember that he himself said that he was "not come to destroy, but to fulfill" the law, (Matt. 5. 17;) that he showed its precepts as applying to the heart and thoughts as well as to conduct; and that every one of them is, by either our Lord or his apostles, more or less directly re-enacted in the New Testament. They define the claims on man of God, his supreme Governor, who must be obeyed. Nor will believing in Christ "make void the law," (Rom. 3. 31,) or weaken its perpetual obligation. Never have Methodists been more foully slandered than in representing them as Antinomians; for while they have proclaimed a free salvation to believing penitents, insisting that no amount of obedience or morality could furnish a ground of pardon, they have always taught that in the day of judgment all men will be judged and rewarded according to their conduct.

Lesson XIII is a "Temperance" Lesson. The Methodist Episcopal Church is very pronounced on this matter. Its "General Rule" forbids "Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity," thus allowing for their medicinal use. This is Wesley's form. He distinguished "spirituous" or distilled from fermented liquors, but the Church puts both under the ban, and forbids "the buying, selling, or using intoxicating liquors as a beverage, signing petitions in favor of granting license for the

sale of intoxicating liquors, becoming bondsmen for persons engaged in such traffic, renting property as the place in or on which to manufacture or sell intoxicating liquors." (Discipline, ¶ 226.) Temperance, in Scripture, means *self-control*; but there are some things in which self-control should extend to *total abstinence*. So the Church says again: "We regard voluntary abstinence from all intoxicants as the true ground of personal temperance, and complete legal prohibition of the traffic in alcoholic drinks as the duty of civil government." (Discipline, ¶ 36.) Methodists mean to do their part in the great battle, and toil on until victory is won.

Opening and Closing Services for the Third Quarter of 1881.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. SILENCE.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. [Psa. 19. 7-14.]

SUPT. The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:

SCHOOL. The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple:

SUPT. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:

SCHOOL. The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes:

SUPT. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever:

SCHOOL. The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

SUPT. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold;

SCHOOL. Sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb.

SUPT. Moreover by them is thy servant warned:

SCHOOL. And in keeping of them there is great reward.

SUPT. Who can understand his errors?

SCHOOL. Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

SUPT. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me:

SCHOOL. Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

ALL. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

III. SINGING.

IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, or APOSTLES' CREED.

V. PRAYER, followed by the LORD'S PRAYER in concert.

VI. READING SCRIPTURE LESSON.

VII. SINGING.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.

II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.

III. RECITATION OF TITLE, TOPIC, GOLDEN TEXT, OUTLINE, and DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION, by the school in concert.

IV. REVIEW and APPLICATION OF THE LESSON, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. THE SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.*

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS, (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting.)

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES, (all standing.)

SUPT. Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise,

SCHOOL. With one accord our parting hymn of praise;

SUPT. We stand to bless thee ere our worship cease,

SCHOOL. Then, with bowed heads, await thy word of peace.

SUPT. Grant us thy peace upon our homeward way;

SCHOOL. With thee began, with thee shall end the day.

SUPT. Guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,

SCHOOL. That in this house have called upon thy name.

III. DISMISSAL.

* Special Lessons in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE PENTATEUCH.

NOTES BY THE REV. J. L. HURLBUT, M.A.

B. C. 1600.]

LESSON 1. ISRAEL IN EGYPT; or, The Bitter Bondage.

[July 3.]

GENERAL STATEMENT.

From the New Testament, we turn back to the Old; from the life of the Redeemer, to the early history of the Chosen People. After a brief recapitulation of the Israelite family and their origin, the sacred writer brings us to a period after the death of Jacob, when the family has sprung up into a people. There is considerable uncertainty as to the period of time covered in this lesson, and in general as to the duration of the sojourning of Israel in Egypt. Some expositors, as Bush, Murphy, and others, follow the received chronology of Archbishop Usher, allowing four generations, or 215 years, in Egypt. This agrees with most of the genealogies, but is contradicted by the statement of Exod. 12. 40, that the sojourning in Egypt was 430 years. This is interpreted to include also the "sojourning" in Canaan, from the covenant with Abraham; but requires the difficulty of an enormous growth, in four generations, to account for the number of the Israelites at the Exodus. Canon Cook, (in the *Speakers' Commentary*,) Keil, and most recent commentators, are of opinion that the Israelites remained 430 years in Egypt, and that the genealogical lists include a name, not in each generation, but in each century, so that our lesson would embrace a period, not of 100, but of nearly 300 years, from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses, and the current chronology back of the Exodus must be increased by about two centuries. The people are now no longer an unnoticed clan, but a host, and growing greater with every year. The time has come when they must either commingle with the Egyptians, and thus lose their national existence and their high destiny, or must prepare to sever entirely from the land of their sojourning. Under a divine overruling, the jealousy of the ruling monarch, and the oppressive measures intended to break the Israelitish spirit, only serve to break the bonds of attachment toward their adopted country, to turn their faces more directly Canaan-ward, and to prepare them for the coming deliverer.

Exod. 1. 1-14.

[Memory Verses, 12-14.]

Explanatory and Practical.

1 Now these are the names of the children of Is'ra-el, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Ja'cob.

2 Reu'ben, Sim'e-on, Le'vi, and Ju'dah,

3 Is'sa-char, Zeb'u-lun, and Ben'ja-min,

4 Dan, and Naph'-ta-li, Gad, and Ash'er.

5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Ja'cob were seventy souls: for Jo'seph was in Egypt already.

Deut. 10. 22: Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons.

6 And Jo'seph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

Gen. 50. 26: So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. Eccles. 1. 4: One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh.

7 And the children of Is'ra-el were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

Gen. 46. 2, 3: And God spake unto Israel. . . fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. Deut. 26. 5: A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous.

8 Now there arose up a new king over E'gypt, which knew not Jo'seph.

Eccles. 19. 15: Now there was found in the city a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.

9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Is'ra-el are more and mightier than we:

10 Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and

Verse 1. Now. Literally, "and." In the original Hebrew, the five books of Moses were one volume; so that this word is properly used as a connective with the former section. **Names of the children.** According to Hebrew custom, the historian returns to the descent into Egypt as a starting-point for the new line of events. **Into Egypt.** Ancient Egypt was divided into two parts. Lower Egypt, embracing the region around the Delta of the Nile, on the eastern side of which the Israelites were settled; and Upper Egypt, the valley of the Nile, from ten to twelve miles wide, from the Delta southward to the Cataracts. The length of the country was one hundred and twelve miles, and its whole extent was less than that of the States of Rhode Island and Connecticut combined. From its secluded position, easily protected from invasion, its fertile soil, favorable climate, and facilities of intercourse by the Nile, it easily attained to a remarkable populousness and civilization. **Every man and his household.** The sons of Jacob, their wives, children, and dependents.

2-5. Reuben, Simeon, Levi. . . Issachar, Zebulun. These were sons of Jacob by Leah, his first wife. Of these, Reuben lost his birthright by an act of crime; Levi was the ancestor of the priestly tribe; and Judah was the founder of the most powerful of all the tribes, the only one which has maintained a separate existence down to the present, and the one through which Christ came. **Benjamin.** The youngest of Jacob's sons, borne by his beloved Rachel, Gen. 35. 16-20. **Dan and Naphtali.** The sons of Bilhah, the handmaid of Rachel, and Jacob's concubine or lesser wife. **Gad and Asher.** Sons of Jacob by Zilpah, handmaid of Leah. **Seventy souls.** In this number are included the children of Joseph as well as the rest of the brothers, and by a Hebraistic idiom, Jacob himself. (1) *God employs small instrumentalities for accomplishing great results, that his own glory may thereby be greater.*

6, 7. Joseph died. After living eighty years as a ruler in Egypt. **All his brethren.** As the sons were nearly of the same age, it is probable that their deaths were not far apart in time. **All that generation.** All of the Israelite family whose birth had taken place in Canaan. **Children of Israel were fruitful.** Egypt has ever been celebrated for fruitfulness, both in crops and in families, and at this time the province where population increases most rapidly is that once occupied by the Israelites. **Increased abundantly.** Literally, "spawned," that is, with the rapidity of fishes. All these expressions point to a period of wonderful increase, during which the people grew from a family into a nation. **Filled with them.** That is, the portion of Egypt in which they were settled, extending from the eastern branch of the Nile to the desert. (2) *God watches over his people, giving them prosperity or adversity as may be for their best interests.*

8. A new king. This is believed to refer, not to a succession upon the throne, but to a change of dynasty. A new line of kings arose, separated from all the traditions of the past. **Knew not Joseph.** He may have known of Joseph's rule and policy from the annals of the kingdom, but cherished no personal attachment to his memory. Egyptologists are divided as to the identification of this king. Most of the writers regard him as Amosis or Aahmes, the first king of the eighteenth or Theban dynasty. He arose in a period of anarchy, at first as ruler of a district in Upper or southern Egypt, and by rapid conquests gained mastery over all the land. (3) *The honor of men is transitory, and soon passes away; let us then seek the favor of God which endureth forever.*

9, 10. He said unto his people. Probably in the council of State, conferring with the leading rulers. **Children of Israel.** He knew and cared to know little of their history, but looked upon them as a foreign race, with alien customs and worshipping other gods than those of Egypt. (4) *God's people are ever misunderstood and undervalued by the world. More and mightier than we.* A gross exaggeration if spoken of the land in general, though in the district of Goshen they may have outnumbered the Egyptian population. "He speaks as if he had looked through a multiplying glass."

fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

Psa. 83. 3, 4: They have taken craftly counsel against thy people.... they have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. Job 5. 13: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the forward is carried headlong.

11 Therefore they did set over them task-masters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pha'raoh treasure cities, Pithon, and Ra-am'ses.

Gen. 15. 13: And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.

12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Is'ra-el.

Psa. 105. 24: And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

13 And the E-gyptians made the children of Is'ra-el to serve with rigor:

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor.

Exod. 2. 23: And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage.

—Trapp. Let us deal wisely. With worldly cunning, rather than true wisdom. (5) *What men call wisdom is often in God's eyes folly.* When there falleth out any war. The Israelites dwell on the eastern border, the only region exposed to invasion, and being of Semitic origin, might be willing to ally themselves with the Asiatic races. **Fight against us.** The offense of the Israelites throughout is only a "may be," a hypothetical case, and not a reality. (6) *How many of our troubles are only in our own imagination!* (7) *How easy it is to find an excuse for an evil purpose!* **Get them up out of the land.** After all, it was not the enmity of the Israelites, but their departure from the land, which he feared. He appreciated their value to the country, and was unwilling to lose their services. From these two verses we infer, 1.) That the Israelites retained a separate national organization, probably patriarchal, and were not incorporated with the Egyptian kingdom. 2.) That they still worshipped the God of their fathers. 3.) That they looked forward to a departure from Egypt and a possession of their promised inheritance.

11. **Taskmasters.** In the original, an Egyptian word, meaning "chiefs of tribute." These were Egyptian nobles, under whom were native Hebrew overseers, Exod. 5. 19. **Burdens.** Of tribute and service. The Israelites were not reduced to personal slavery to individuals, as Joseph had been to Potiphar; but were oppressed by heavy exactions in taxation and compulsory labor on the public works. **Pharaoh.** The title of the king of Egypt in all ancient times. It is derived from a word meaning "the sun." **Treasure-cities.** "Magazines," depots for military supplies and provisions. **Pithom and Raameses.** Two cities in the district of Goshen, built long before, but now enlarged and fortified for defense to the frontiers.

12, 13. **They afflicted them.** The discipline of trial was a part of the divine plan to make them willing to leave Egypt, and to toughen them for the conquest of their own inheritance. (8) *Trials come to God's people only so far as will train them for blessings.* **The more they multiplied.** Showing that they were under a divine care. (9) *"Times of affliction have ever been the Church's growing times."* **They were grieved.** The word in the original "expresses a mixture of loathing and alarm."—Canon Cook. **Serve with rigor.** The failure of their first endeavors to check the growth of Israel only made the Egyptians more determined in their purpose, so they instituted even more severe measures.

14. **Bitter with hard bondage.** In order to break their spirits, shorten their lives, stop their increase, and diminish their numbers. **Mortar and in brick.** Many of the buildings of Egypt were built of brick, made from Nile-mud mixed with chopped straw, and dried in the sun. In a temple at Thebes is still seen depicted the process of brick-making by captives, with overseers sitting by, whip in hand. (See picture in Lesson Commentary, page 198.) **In the field.** Probably in digging canals, by which the water of the Nile was carried every-where throughout the land for irrigation.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Israel in Egypt. Exod. 1. 1-14.
Tu. Remembering the bondage. Dent. 8. 6-20.
W. The song of deliverance. Psa. 105. 1-24.
Th. The bondage of sin. John 8. 21-36.
F. The bondage of sin. Rom. 6. 11-23.
S. The easy yoke. Matt. 11. 20-30.
S. The redeeming blood. Col. 1. 1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage. Exod. 1. 14.

LESSON HYMN. L. M.

Hymnal, No. 629.

O Love divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest
tear!
On thee we cast our earthborn care;
We smile at pain while thou art
near.
Though long the weary way we
tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering
year.

No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, "Thou art near!"
On thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love divine, forever dear;
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, thou art near!

TIME.—The lesson includes a period of over one hundred years, from B. C. 1706, the date of the descent into Egypt, to B. C. 1600, the beginning of the bondage.

PLACE.—The land of Goshen, on the border between Egypt and the wilderness.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's fidelity to promise.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. A Prosperous People, v. 1-7.

What events led the family of Jacob to go to Egypt?

How large was the family at that time?

What is stated concerning their growth in numbers?

What causes led to this great increase?

What was its providential purpose?

In what respects was this people under the divine care?

Did God's choice of them as a nation involve the personal salvation of all their people?

2. A Cruel King, v. 8-10.

Who came to the throne in Egypt?

What is here meant by "a new king?"

Why did he not know Joseph?

What fear did this king have?

What character did such fears show?

What policy did he resolve upon?

Why did he not desire the Israelites to leave the land?

What is said of such conduct in Psa. 83. 3, 4?

What is the success of such plans? Prov. 21. 30?

3. A Bitter Bondage, v. 11-14.

What was done to the Israelites?

How had this been foreseen and foretold? Gen. 15. 13.

What was their work?

What was the result of these afflictions?

Why did Israel grow under these unfavorable circumstances? Psa. 105. 24.

Why is adversity sometimes a blessing?

What is said in Rom. 8. 29?

What was the treatment of the Israelites in Egypt?

To what did their trouble lead them? Exod. 2. 23.

Practical Teachings.

What is here taught—1. Concerning the growth of God's people? 2. Concerning the sufferings of God's people? 3. Concerning the result of trouble to God's people?



QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Prosperous People, v. 1-7.

What people are here mentioned?
 Why are they called children of Israel?
 Who was Israel?
 What other name did he have?
 From what country and how did they come into Egypt?
 How old was Joseph when he died? Gen. 50. 26.
 What is said of the prosperity of the Israelites in v. 7?
 What promise had been made to Abraham? Gen. 15. 5.
 How did this show God's faithfulness to his promise?

2. A Cruel King, v. 8-10.

What king arose?
 How long after Joseph's time?
 What had Joseph done?
 Who will remember our good deeds? Heb. 6. 10.
 Of what was this king afraid?
 What did he propose to do?
 Can any one expect to succeed against God's plan?
 Prov. 21. 30.

3. A Bitter Bondage, v. 11-14.

What plan did the king pursue?
 What were the Israelites compelled to build?
 What was the result of their troubles?
 By whose power did they grow? Psa. 105. 24.
 What were some of the burdens of the Israelites?
 What is a more bitter bondage than that of the Israelites? John 8. 34.
 How may we be freed from it? Gal. 5. 1.

Teachings of the Lesson.

How may we learn from this lesson—1. That God keeps his promises? 2. That men forget good deeds? 3. That plans against God's will are vain?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

1. A Prosperous People, v. 1-7.

What people is here spoken of? **The children of Israel.**

Where were they? **In Egypt.**
 How many were they when they went to Egypt?
Seventy persons.

Who were they? **Jacob, his sons, and their children.**

What became of them in Egypt? **They grew into a great people.**

Why did they grow so great? **Because God cared for them.**

2. A Cruel King, v. 8-10.

By what name were all the kings of Egypt called?
Pharaoh, which means "the sun."

Who became the king of Egypt? **One who knew nothing about Joseph.**

What had Joseph done? **He had saved Egypt in the famine.**

How did this new king look on the Israelites? **He did not wish them to become strong.**

Why not? **Because he feared they might become enemies of Egypt.**

What did he resolve to do? **To keep them under his own power.**

How did he do this? **By making new and cruel laws.**

3. A Bitter Bondage, v. 11-14.

Whom did Pharaoh place over the Israelites? **Taskmasters.**

What did these taskmasters do? **They made the Israelites work very hard.**

What kind of work did they do? **They built cities of brick for Pharaoh.**

What is said in the GOLDEN TEXT?

Did their trouble keep the Israelites from growing?
The more they were troubled, the faster they grew.

Why did they grow, in spite of their trouble? **Because God was with them.**

Words with Little People.

1. Remember that kind deeds are sometimes forgotten by men, but never by the Lord. 2. God's people may meet with trouble from the world. 3. Bear wrongs patiently, and trust in God. 4. Remember that God will make even trouble a blessing to those who love him.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What was the number of the Israelite family when they went down to Egypt? **Seventy persons.**

2. How long did they remain there? **Until the times of Moses.**

3. What happened to them as a people? **They increased abundantly.**

4. Who became ruler over Egypt? **A king who knew not Joseph.**

5. What was his treatment of the Israelites? **He made them slaves.**

THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

I. GOD. § 1. HIS NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES.

1. Who made you? **God.**
2. Who is God? **The Creator of all things.**
3. What is God? **An uncreated Spirit?**
4. Where is God? **God is every-where.**
5. What does God know? **God is all-wise; he knoweth all things, even the thoughts of our hearts.—1 John 3. 20.**
6. What can God do? **God is almighty; he doeth whatsoever he will.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The People of God.

I. A LOWLY PEOPLE.

All the souls... were seventy. v. 5.
"The pit whence ye are digged." Isa. 51. 1.

II. A GROWING PEOPLE.

Fruitful, and increased abundantly. v. 7.
"Who can count the dust of Jacob?" Num. 23. 10.

III. A HATED PEOPLE.

Let us deal wisely with them. v. 10.
"Taken crafty counsel against thy people." Psa. 83. 3.

IV. A SUFFERING PEOPLE.

Taskmasters to afflict them. v. 11.
"Accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Rom. 8. 36.

V. A PROTECTED PEOPLE.

More afflicted... more they... grieve. v. 12.
"Hide me... shadow of thy wings." Psa. 17. 8.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The People of God.

1. The people of God spring from a small beginning: twelve sons in the ancient Church, and twelve apostles in the Gospel period. v. 1.

2. The people of God die as individuals, but live on and live ever as a body. v. 6.

3. The people of God are under the care of God, and grow by the divine protection. v. 7.

4. The people of God cannot long remain in friendship with the world without either becoming its open enemies or conforming to its principles. v. 8, 9.

5. The people of God are feared by the world in proportion to their progress and their faithfulness. v. 10.

6. The people of God are often persecuted by an unfriendly world. v. 11.

7. The people of God cannot be crushed out of existence, but will grow in spite of persecution, since God is on their side. v. 12.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

A SINGULAR picture is presented to us in the verses chosen for this lesson. We find our sympathy bestowed for a whole nation. Here is a people strong and prosperous, and of ever increasing numbers, brought into a state of abject slavery by those who at first envied and feared them. "They made their lives bitter with hard bondage." It is a piteous spectacle. But let us inquire:

In what did this "hard bondage" really consist?
 Through the work of those who have made Egyptian

antiquities their study we have been rendered familiar with the different kinds of service that were exacted from the Israelites. We read of the laborious work of irrigation, every drop of water having to be brought by artificial means to the spot where it was needed. We read of stupendous buildings, erected by the hands of captives or slaves. On the monuments of ancient Egypt we can see these very things depicted. And we know that the work must have been performed under a scorching sun and from time to time in exposure, to pestilential winds. Yet hard work, simply as such, is not "bondage" and need not be "bitter." I suppose some of the very hardest workers have been those who have toiled from morning to night, and often from night to morning again, of their own free will. For seven years' Jacob toiled for Rachael, and "they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her." And by the toil of which he himself says, "In the day the drought consumed me and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes," he enriched himself and his family. And so at the present time does many a man, and many a woman too, work hard from day to day, yet count that work neither "bondage" nor "bitter." In what then did the bondage and the bitterness consist? First, in the fact that the labor imposed on them brought no profit whatever to themselves, nor to any one they cared for. Secondly, the work was even worse than profitless. It was imposed upon them for the express purpose of injuring them.

We can scarcely suppose that all this was imposed on them, and understood by them, all at once. The king's advice was: "Come on, let us deal *wisely* with them." A light service in return for the advantages secured to them in a fertile country like Egypt, or as an acknowledgment of the king's supremacy, might be all that was at first demanded. But the demands grew heavier and heavier, the exactions greater and greater, until at last the iron yoke was firmly riveted upon the necks of the unhappy Israelites, and they found themselves an enslaved and down-trodden people.

We know that this was part of the purpose of God in their history, and that as such it was revealed beforehand to their forefather Abraham. Gen. 15. 13. But did it come upon the Israelites without any fault of their own? Assuredly not. In the passage before us we are told that "the land was filled with them." Does this mean that instead of keeping to themselves in the land of Goshen, they mingled with the Egyptians, and thus attracted the attention of the latter to their wealth and greatness? Anyhow, we have the testimony of Scripture to the fact that during the years of their sojourn in the "strange land" they forsook the Lord, and learned to worship the gods of the people round about them. Josh. 24. 14; Ezek. 20. 7, 8. Thus, descending from their high position as witnesses for Jehovah, they needed the discipline of suffering before they could be restored.

And in the view presented to us of their toil and

their misery, we have a faithful picture of the bondage of sin.

The indulgences and luxuries of Egypt presented great attractions to the Israelites. Exod. 16. 3; Num. 11. 5; 16. 13. Even so do the "pleasures of sin, which are for a season" to the carnal mind. Sin often appears at first as an attractive, pleasant companion, but when it is received, indulged, obeyed, it becomes the master; ruling its slave with a rod of iron, and making his life "bitter with hard bondage."

And the bondage consists in this—not that the worldling is toiling, but that his toil is profitless. "Surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them." Cardinal Wolsey served his king faithfully, yet he could not exclaim in his old age that he was forsaken! King Solomon, with all his wealth, wisdom, and grandeur, could only come to the conclusion that "all is vanity!" And even young people have tasted the emptiness of pleasure, and felt the aching void which no strivings of their own can fill.

But the bondage of sin is not merely profitless; it is cruel. Even children know something of this. They suffer from their bad tempers, they are often weary of their naughtiness, yet find it hard to get free. But tenfold hard is it when the bands of sin have been allowed to grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength. And yet many young people have the idea that when they are older they shall, as a matter of course, get the mastery over the sin by which they are overcome. This is a delusion which should be carefully pointed out. The devil does not let his captives go free so easily. He deals "wisely," luring them on little by little until the chain is firmly fastened on them. And this he does like the Egyptian king, for the express purpose of ruining them. He will not spare for their crying, as many a poor miserable slave has experienced, who knows that he is being driven onward to perish. The bondage of sin is indeed "hard" and "bitter."

But, turning back to the Israelites, let us inquire, *from what quarter could help be looked for?*

Although the Egyptians could not hinder the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, in one respect their policy was successful. The Israelites were utterly crushed and broken in spirit. When Moses, in his early zeal and self-confidence, stood before them as a deliverer, they turned the cold shoulder upon him. We read of the Helots in Lacedæmon rising against their tyrants; of the gladiators under Spartacus daring the whole power of the Roman Empire. But no Israelite dreamed of throwing off the Egyptian yoke. The few who still retained the faith of their fathers, and had some remembrance of the promise made to them, must have known that their only hope was in God.

Their only hope was in God. But if they had any reason to hope in him, that hope was every thing. If God undertook their cause, it must certainly be righted. If God arose to save them, their

salvation was secured. Had they any sure ground for this hope? Most decidedly they had. As the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God was pledged to care for them. Of his own free goodness and mercy he had made a covenant with Abraham and his seed. And his word could not fail.

And so with those who are under the bondage of sin. There is no help for them but in God. It is true that there is such a thing as reformation. There are many evil habits which a man *can* shake off, if he only take them in time. But when he has got rid of this evil habit he is not therefore free. If he has given up the more hateful form of sin, in its more subtle form it still clings to him. It is not only the drunkard, the reveler, the thief, who is held in hard and cruel bondage. That life whose horizon is bounded by this world, and whose future loses itself in dark uncertainties, is sad and bitter as theirs, if its true condition be once felt and realized. And the man cannot right himself. The fast-bound limbs cannot free themselves from their fetters. And though at times the hard bondage forces out a groan, there is perhaps no thought of, nor even a desire for, deliverance. Any offer of help is spurned, and the slave of sin prefers to be left alone in his bondage.

But there is hope in God!

Of his own free love and mercy he comes to the rescue. God undertakes to loose the chains of the oppressed, to deliver the captives who are appointed unto death; to save sinners. If this be true they may, indeed, rejoice, for their cause is espoused by one who cannot fail. And it is, indeed, true. As surely as God was pledged to deliver Israel, so is he pledged to save sinners. He gave his only Son to die for them, and the blood that was shed on Calvary demands their salvation.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

A concise review of the events leading to the descent into Egypt.... A very short discussion on the duration of the sojourning in Egypt. (See General Statement.) The characteristics of the Israelites in Egypt: 1.) A peculiar people; 2.) An expectant people, (waiting for inheritance in Canaan;) 3.) A growing people; 4.) A hated people; 5.) A persecuted people; 6.) A divinely-protected people.... Lessons concerning the people of God in relation to the world. (See Add. Prac. Lessons).... Lessons concerning affliction and trial: 1.) Times of prosperity are followed by trial; 2.) The world gives trouble to God's people; 3.) Trouble may become a blessing, (wherein, in this instance?) 4.) Afflictions are under the divine eye.... ILLUSTRATIONS. Persecution. Joseph, Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Paul, etc., in Scripture.... Blessings of adversity. The great trees of California are where the storms beat upon them, while those growing in sheltered places are weak.... Character is like iron, made strong by fire and anvil.... Out of filthy rags, torn, cleansed, ground, and transformed, is made the finest white paper: so by discipline the worthless family of Israel becomes the Church of God.

References. FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA OF PROSE ILLUSTRATIONS: Vol. I. 315, 5333, 5345. Vol. II. 6869, 12100. POETICAL: Vol. I. 2764. Vol. II. 3804, FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK: Bricks, 109, 616; Mortar. 159.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

INTRODUCTORY. We have been learning about Jesus for the last six months. In what part of the Bible do we look for the story of his life? Now we go to the other part of the Bible. What is that called? Is this, too, God's word? Yes, it is all his book, and we are going to learn about some people who had a great deal of trouble, and we shall see how God took care of them. To-day we shall hear about their trouble, and next Sunday about a baby who was one day to help them out of all their difficulties.

LESSON THOUGHT. God watches over us.

1. Recall enough of the story of Joseph to show how the Israelites came to be in Egypt. Tell how they had prospered there, until now they were a great people. Joseph and his brothers were all dead, and now a new king came, who did not know Joseph, and who did not care for his good work in Egypt.

GOD OUR KING
YESTERDAY,
TO DAY,
FOREVER.

2. What is a king's work? Speak of his power to make happy or miserable, and then draw out the thought on the blackboard, "God our King." Will he ever forget? Can he? Talk about kings dying like other men. Tell the story of Luther's wife putting on black clothes when her husband was gloomy, and seeming to be in deep grief, because, as she said, "God is dead." Print "Yesterday, To-day, and Forever," and show how good it is to have a king all power and all love, who will live forever.

3. Tell what the new king did, and why he did it. Outline a yoke on the board, and ask when and on what a yoke is used. Is it pleasant to carry burdens, to work hard all the time, to be treated cruelly? No, the lives of the Israelites were "made bitter." Show that though it was the new king who made them so, God allowed it, and it was for their good. Print "God in all," and teach about the yoke that Christ wants us to wear for his sake. We shall have trouble, too, but if we love and obey Jesus, our yoke shall be an easy one, made easy by the love and grace of our dear Lord.

GOD IN ALL
MY
YOKE
IS EASY

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.

ISRAEL'S EXTREMITY,
WAS GOD'S OPPORTUNITY.
EGYPTIAN
OPPRESSION
ISRAEL
THIS AFFLICTION
WAS TO MAKE THEM
LONG TO BE FREE.

The Egyptian yoke was on the people of Israel. This brought them to extreme distress, and God thus suffered the Egyptians to oppress them, in order that they might be weaned from any desire to remain in the land, and long to be free. The king forgot Joseph. Israel forgot God. God remembered his promise.

B. C. 1571.] LESSON II. THE COMING DELIVERER; or, The Choice of Faith. [July 10.**GENERAL STATEMENT.**

For a whole generation of years the hand of oppression has been resting upon Israel, and the spirits of the people sink lower, while their numbers as steadily increase. At last the cruel edict goes forth that all male children of the hated race are to be destroyed. An Israelite mother looks upon her babe, and boldly ventures upon a plan for its protection. Thinking that if once the eyes of the king's daughter fall upon the sweet face of her little one, she will not have the heart to leave it to perish, the mother frames a little boat of wicker work, making it impenetrable to the water, and lays her babe in it. Then she commits it to the river, just at the place and time where Pharaoh's daughter is wont to bathe, and leaves its elder sister to watch its fate. The little vessel, bearing the destiny, not only of a nation, but of the world as well, floats among the flags at the margin of the river, until the princess, seeing it, orders it to be brought. The fair face and the pleading cries of the babe are more eloquent than words, and it is adopted as the child of Pharaoh's daughter, though sent to be nursed by its own mother. Thus, in the palace of Pharaoh, fed at the royal table, grows up the destined deliverer of the Lord's people. Forty years pass, and the founding of the Nile, whose name, Moses, proclaims his origin, now stands once more among his own people, having renounced the honors of Egypt for a place among the despised people of God. He strikes a blow for liberty, expecting that his fellow countrymen will rally around his standard. But their hearts are too craven, and their spirits are sunk too low to respond to his call. They would rather endure bondage in Egypt than seek their own inheritance in Canaan: So the coming deliverer is compelled to take refuge beyond the reach of Pharaoh's vengeance, and, sitting by the well of Midian, awaits the development of the divine plans.

Exod. 2. 5-15.*[Memory verses 9, 10.]*

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

Acts 7, 21: When he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

6 And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.

Luke 10, 33, 34: A certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. . . . and took care of him.

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

Psa. 33, 18, 19: Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death. Psa. 91, 11: For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. Psa. 18, 16, 17: He went from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters: he delivered me from my strong enemy.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

Psa. 113, 7, 8: He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes.

11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that

Explanatory and Practical.

Verse 5. The daughter of Pharaoh. Her name is not known with certainty, though given by Josephus as Thermuthis. **To wash herself.** Probably an act of religious worship, as the Nile received divine honors, and was believed to give fruitfulness and long life to those who bathed in its waters. **Her maidens.** Female servants in attendance upon the princess. **Saw the ark.** A basket of paper-reeds, cemented by bitumen or Nile-mud, in which the infant Moses had been placed by his mother. **Among the flags.** The sedge-grass, growing along the margin of the river. **Sent her maid.** (1) *Upon what small incidents do great results to the world depend!* The chosen nation finds a founder, law-giver, and leader, from the curiosity of an Egyptian princess.

6. Opened it. It was probably covered in order to prevent the little one from falling out. **Saw the child.** Literally, "and she saw him, the child; and behold, a male infant, weeping." **She had compassion.** That very child was, long after, the writer of this story, and there is a tenderness in his recollection of the princess, his adopting mother. (2) *It is fortunate that character is not always hereditary; a cruel father may have a compassionate daughter.* **One of the Hebrews' children.** From the complexion and appearance of the babe, she recognized its nationality. The word **Hebrew** has been defined by some as "a crosser over," or "from beyond," referring to the origin of the race beyond the Euphrates, and by others as "a descendant of Eber, or Heber," who was the great-grandson of Shem, and the ancestor of Abraham.

7. His sister. Miriam, who was then a girl twelve years old, and intelligent beyond her years. (3) *How much even a child may do to help others!* **Shall I go.** The young girl was near at hand, watching over her baby-brother, and showed wonderful courage and tact by the plan which she suggested and carried out. (4) *Let young people learn a lesson of thoughtfulness and helpfulness, especially in the care of younger children.* **Nurse the child for thee.** Whether the princess had already determined to protect and adopt the infant, or whether she received the suggestion from Miriam, it was equally a matter of divine ordering. (5) *How seemingly minute are the elements which enter into the divine providences!*

8, 9. Pharaoh's daughter said. In her conduct she showed a noble independence, a conscientiousness, and a breadth of views which lifted her above the narrow prejudices of race and religion. **Called the child's mother.** This plan may have been agreed upon in advance, between the mother and sister of the babe, or it may have come as an inspiration to the mind of the girl. **Nurse it for me.** This command, and its accompanying promise, may well be taken as a motto by parents and teachers of little children. (6) *Those who train their children as a royal trust committed to them receive an abundant reward.* **The woman.** Moses' mother, whose name was Jochebed. Like her husband, Amram, she was a descendant of Levi. **Nursed it.** Fulfilling the services, under pay and protection, for the privilege of which she would gladly have given her own life. We are told in Heb. 11, 23, that her exposure of her child was an act of faith, since she trusted that through it God would protect his life.

10. She brought him. Probably the growing babe was often visited by the princess, and at a suitable age was summoned to the palace for his education. It is not necessary to suppose, however, that all intercourse with his own family and people was broken off: for the home of Jochebed must have been near by; he would naturally retain affection for her as his former nurse; she would have for him both an Israelite's interest and a mother's love; and thus with his literary education, at the same time he was receiving a religious training. **Moses.** The word is Egyptian, and means "drawn out, or born;" referring to the child as one "born" from the water in which his adopting mother first saw him.

11. In those days. Between the tenth and eleventh verses, there is a gap of nearly forty years in the record. With the modesty of true greatness, and keeping in view his purpose of relating, not his own biography, but the story of his people's deliverance, Moses says as little as possible concerning himself. In Stephen's address (Acts 7, 23) his learning and influence among the Egyptians are mentioned; and traditions are given by Josephus of his military triumphs, and his prospective succession to the throne. **When Moses was grown.** According to Acts 7, 23, at the age of forty years, **He went out unto his brethren.** Indicating that he knew them to be his

there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

Matt. 5. 9: Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and he dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

Heb. 11. 24, 27: By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter....By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

brethren, and went to them as such. Undoubtedly, here is the brief hint of an attempt at freedom, which failed because neither leader nor people were fully prepared for their work. He had now made the solemn choice of the GOLDEN TEXT, renouncing the honors of Egypt at the call of duty to ally himself with the people of God. **An Egyptian.** One of the overseers in charge of a gang of Hebrews, who was treating the serfs with unusual severity.

12, 13. **Looked.** Not from guilt, but from soldierly caution, regarding the great contest as having begun, and himself as the commissioned leader. **Slew the Egyptian.** An act of passion, and therefore wrong: for Moses was not authorized to execute vengeance on the oppressors of his people. Yet it should not be judged by the standards of our own time, for there was a certain justice in it, though wild and blind. **hid him in the sand.** A touch of nature in the description, for the soil of Egypt is mere sand, blown about by the desert winds. **Wherefore smitest thou.** From Acts 7. 25, we learn that Moses felt the divine call, and expected his countrymen to recognize him as their leader. (7) *Every man has some interest in the wrongs of every other man.* **Thy fellow.** Rather, "Thy neighbor."

14, 15. **Who made thee.** The answer showed that his people were not yet ready to combine under his leadership, and had even betrayed him to their enemies. (8) *False friends are more dangerous to a cause than open enemies.* **Moses feared.** Feared not the king's wrath, nor the final outcome of the contest between Israel and Egypt, but feared lest his own too hasty act might injure the cause. **Pharaoh heard....sought to slay.** Not so much in punishment for the act of slaughter, but because it showed that the impetuous and able young noble had deliberately taken up the cause of his oppressed countrymen. **Moses fled.** Having openly broken with the ruling powers, and having been rejected by his own people, flight was his only resource. **Land of Midian.** A region along the Eranitic Gulf, (Gulf of Akaba,) but whether on the eastern or western shore cannot now be determined. **Sat down.** Immediately after his arrival. **By a well.** "By the well," that is, the well of the vicinity; the place of concourse for all eastern villages.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The coming deliverer. Exod. 2. 5-15.
 Tu. Moses in Midian. Exod. 2. 16-25.
 W. The choice of Moses. Heb. 11. 17-27.
 Th. Stephen's address. Acts 7. 17-29.
 F. The Psalmist's faith. Psa. 27. 1-14.
 S. Decision for Christ. Luke 14. 25-35.
 S. Praise for mercies. Psa. 124. 1-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Heb. 11. 24.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 667.

O for a faith that will not shrink,
 Though pressed by every foe;
 That will not tremble on the brink
 Of any earthly woe!
 That bears, unmoved, the world's
 dread frown,
 Nor heeds its scornful smile;
 That seas of trouble cannot drown,
 Nor Satan's arts beguile.

Lord, give us such a faith as this,
 And then, whatever may come,
 We'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
 Of an eternal home.

TIME.—The birth of Moses, B. C. 1571. The events of v. 11-15 forty years later, B. C. 1531.

PLACE.—Probably Zoan or Tanis, near the hill, in Egypt.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. The command of Pharaoh, for the slaughter of all the male children of Israel. Exod. 1. 15-22. 2. The birth of Moses. Exod. 2. 1-4.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Divine providence.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. In the river, v. 5-10.

- What river is here referred to?
 Why was it important to Egypt?
 Who was found in the river? How came he there?
 How did the hiding of Moses illustrate Heb. 11. 23?
 By whom was he found?
 How did she feel toward the babe, and treat it?
 How does this incident illustrate Psa. 76. 10?
 Who was Moses' sister? Exod. 15. 20.
 How did her conduct show tact and wisdom?
 What was the command of Pharaoh's daughter?
 How did all this reveal God's overruling providence?
 What was the significance of the name given to the child?

2. In the Field, v. 11-14.

- How was Moses' adoption by the princess a benefit to him? Acts 7. 22.
 What happened when he was grown?
 What was his age at that time? Acts 7. 23.
 What decision was shown by this visit? Heb. 11. 24-26.
 What influenced this choice of Moses?
 What losses and what gains did it involve?
 Wherein may we take it as an example?
 What did Moses do to an Egyptian?
 What motive led him to this act? Acts 7. 25.
 Was his conduct right?
 What happened on the next day?
 How was he treated by his own people?
 What is said in Acts 7. 35?

3. In the desert, v. 15.

- What was the cause of Moses' flight?
 To what land did he go?
 What was the relationship of the Midianites to Israel? Gen. 25. 1, 2.
 How long was he in Midian? Acts 7. 30.
 What was his occupation there?

Practical Teachings.

Where does this lesson teach—1. Concerning the providence of God? 2. Concerning decision for God? 3. Concerning differences among God's people?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. In the River, v. 5-10. What river was this?

- Who came to it? For what purpose?
 What did she find? Who was in the ark?
 How came he there? v. 3.
 What was the purpose of this?
 What did the daughter of Pharaoh say?
 Who spoke to her? What did she offer to do?
 Who became the child's nurse?
 What became of this child?
 What was his name? Why was it given?
 How did all this show the care of God?

2. In the Field, v. 11-14.

- What happened when Moses was grown?
 How old was he at this time? Acts 7. 23.
 What purpose did this visit show? GOLDEN TEXT.
 What did he choose to do and suffer? Heb. 11. 25, 26.
 Why did he choose to be an Israelite?
 What did Moses see? What did he do?
 Why did he do this? Acts 7. 25.
 Was his act right? Why?
 What did he see the next day? What did he say?
 What does the word "fellow" here mean?
 Whom should we regard as our brothers?
 How were Moses' words received?
 Why did Moses fear?



3. In the Desert, v. 15.

Who was Pharaoh? What did he do?
Why did he seek to slay Moses? What did Moses do?
Where did he go? Where was this?
Where did he sit down to rest?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where do we find in this lesson—1. An example of compassion? 2. An example of sisterly kindness? 3. An example of self-denying faith?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**1. In the River, v. 5-10.**

Whom did Pharaoh command to be thrown into the river? **All the boy-babies of the Israelites.**

Why did he order this? **To stop the growth of the people.**

What did one mother do with her little boy? **She placed him in a little ark or boat.**

What did she then do with the boat? **She left it at the edge of the river.**

Who stood by to watch it? **The baby's older sister, named Miriam.**

Who found it in the water? **The daughter of King Pharaoh.**

What did she do? **She loved him, and took him for her own child.**

Who offered to find a nurse for the child? **His sister Miriam.**

Whom did she call? **The child's mother.**

What did Pharaoh's daughter say to the child's mother? [Read verse 9.]

What name was given to this child? **Moses, which means "drawn out."**

Why was this name given to him? **Because he was taken out of the water.**

How was Moses brought up? **As a prince in Egypt.**

2. In the Field, v. 11-14.

What is said in the **GOLDEN TEXT**?

What did Moses choose? **To suffer trouble with the Israelites.**

Why did he choose them? **Because they were God's people.**

What did he see in the field? **An Egyptian striking one of his people.**

What did he do? **He killed the Egyptian.**

Was this right? **It was wrong.**

What did Moses see afterward? **Two Israelites quarrelling.**

What did he try to do? **To make peace between them.**

What did one of them say? **"Who made thee a prince over us?"**

What else did the man say? **"Will you kill me as you did the Egyptian?"**

What did this show? **That what he had done was known.**

3. In the Desert, v. 15.

What did Moses do? **He ran away from Egypt.**

To what land did he go? **To the land of Midian.**

What kind of a land was this? **A wilderness.**

Words with Little People.

1. Thank God for a good home and loving parents.
2. Be kind to all children who need help.
3. Choose the Lord's people for your friends.
4. Try to be a peacemaker.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who delivered the Israelites from bondage in Egypt? **Moses.**

2. What was the law with respect to the Israelites when Moses was born? **That their male children should be slain.**

3. Where was the infant Moses left by his mother? **In an ark by the Nile.**

4. By whom was he found and adopted as a son? **By the daughter of Pharaoh.**

5. What did Moses commit when he became a man? **He slew an Egyptian oppressor.**

6. To what country did he then flee? **To the land of Midian.**

THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

I. GOD. §1. HIS NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES.

7. How long has God existed? **God is eternal; he has lived always, and will live forever.**

8. What is the character of God? **"God is love."—1 John 4. 8.**

9. Is God holy? **"God is holy; he hateth all workers of iniquity."—Psa. 5. 5.**

10. Is God merciful? **"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."—Psa. 103. 8.**

11. Is God just? **"The Lord is just, rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked."**

12. Is God true? **He is "the God of truth."—Isa. 65. 16. He "cannot lie."—Titus 1. 2.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Five Examples in the Lesson.

I. THE EXAMPLE OF TRUST.

The ark among the flags. v. 5.

"By faith....not afraid....commandment." Heb. 11. 23.

II. THE EXAMPLE OF COMPASSION.

She had compassion on him. v. 6.

"Having compassion one of another." 1 Pet. 3. 8.

III. THE EXAMPLE OF TACT.

Shall I....call....a nurse? v. 7.

"If any....lack wisdom....ask." James 1. 5.

IV. THE EXAMPLE OF LIBERality.

Nurse it for me....wages. v. 9.

"He that giveth....with simplicity." Rom. 12. 8.

He became her son. v. 19.

"By one Spirit....into one body." 1 Cor. 12. 13.

V. THE EXAMPLE OF DECISION.

Went out unto his brethren. v. 11.

"Choosing....affliction with the people of God." Heb. 11. 25.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.**The Plans of God.**

1. The plans of God include small events as well as great in their scope. v. 5.

2. The plans of God make use of unconscious instrumentalities. v. 6.

3. The plans of God make even the power of adversities serve the divine purposes. v. 9.

4. The plans of God develop instrumentalities fully equipped to accomplish their work. v. 10.

5. The plans of God can afford to wait until the fitting time for their accomplishment. v. 11.

6. The plans of God are not always recognized by those whom they are meant to benefit. v. 14.

7. The plans of God require workers trained by experience as well as endowed with ability. v. 15.

English Teacher's Notes.

WHEN Mr. and Mrs. Brassey, in their voyage round the world in the "Sunbeam," called at Terra del Fuogo, the Indians offered them warm furs in exchange for a few strings of beads. Why were these Indians willing to make so bad a bargain? The answer is, that in their view it was not a bad bargain. They were parting with things which they held of small account in order to gain what they highly prized. They chose what seemed to them the more precious possession. It is not in human nature for a man to give up a thing he prizes unless he expects by so doing to obtain something better. The lesser good may be sacrificed for the greater, but never, unless under the blinding influence of passion, the greater to the less. But, of course, we have to bear in mind the difference between the absolute value of any two things, and their apparent value in the sight of the man who has to choose between them. For his choice will really be determined by his own estimate of their respective worth,

Twice in to-day's lesson we have the subject of *giving up* brought before us.

First, there is the touching story of the babe—born among enemies, threatened from his earliest moments, carefully hidden, and at last carried out of his parents' house in an ark or *coffin* of bulrushes, as if dead, and laid among the reeds by the river's brink. Rescued by the daughter of Pharaoh, his own mother is hired to nurse the child, and bring him up for his preserver. And how does that mother act? Does she passionately claim the babe as her own, and with eloquent tears seek to move the heart of the princess, and get her child restored to her? Not at all; she calmly accepts the charge, and for a few years tends the little one from whom she will have again to part. And when the day arrives she makes no attempt to keep the son who must have become so dear to her. She quietly *gives up* her "goodly child." "She brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son."

Secondly, we see the same child, grown to man's estate, surrounded by every thing that can dazzle the mind, a brilliant path before him, yet halting, and deliberately turning aside to choose what must then have appeared a most unenviable lot. At the age of forty, with a thorough understanding of all that he was giving up, Moses "refused to become the son of Pharaoh's daughter." It is difficult for us to grasp the whole meaning of the situation. But take the case of the boy who is advancing to man's estate, and who, with excellent abilities and aptitude for business, has obtained a good start in life and may reasonably look forward to a prosperous and honorable career. And consider what it would be to such a one deliberately to *give up* his fair prospects, and face poverty, obscurity, or even contempt. And take the case of the young girl who has inherited a brilliant fortune, and who finds herself admired and courted on all sides, and think what it would be to her to *give up* all this, and find herself neglected and forgotten. And let these illustrate the choice of Moses.

I. The first thing this narrative teaches us is that God requires a choice from man, and that this choice involves a *giving up*. The young people who fancy religion consists in renouncing all that the world calls bright are not so far wrong after all. Their mistake is that they are ignorant of the limits and extent of the renunciation, and that they altogether leave out the glorious gain. He that would follow Christ has indeed something to give up, and something which is not inconsiderable. He must give up—and this is no light thing—his own will and his own way. He must give up the world's standard of right and wrong, the world's measurements, and the world's authority. He may even be called upon, like the young ruler who "went away sorrowful," to part with all that he has. It should be very plainly set forth before the young that Christ demands the *whole man*—the whole heart, the whole mind, the whole life. Do not let them suppose that they may give half. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my dis-

ciple," (Luke 14. 33,) are the words of the Divine Master. And he who thus spake knew what it was to give up. He of whom Moses was a type, had laid aside his glory, and taken upon himself the "form of a servant," that he might save sinners. "For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame." The following of Christ necessarily implies self-sacrifice in some form or other.

II. But Moses' mother and her son, when they gave up, the one her "goodly child," and the other his royal station, were looking for something far exceeding in value all that they renounced. Learning, as we do, that it was by faith the babe was hidden for three months, we are sure that the parents were able to look on into the future and to grasp those promises which involved the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. We cannot doubt that the mother noted well the wonderful preservation of her child, and the providence which placed him in the hands of Pharaoh's daughter, and probably, like Mary, she "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." Luke 2. 19.

The motive of Moses' choice is plainly told us in Heb. 11. 26. He esteemed the "reproach of Christ" with the "reward" that was to crown it, "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." He gave up the less for the greater.

And God never calls upon us to do otherwise. He always invites us to give up the less for the greater. This is the second lesson we learn from the history. It is the very same we may read in nature. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," John 12. 24. The apple-tree parts with its lovely blossoms, to stand, by and by, laden with golden or with ruddy fruit. The caterpillar loses its lower life to reappear as a bright-winged butterfly. And whenever the loving Father calls upon living souls that he has made, to renounce any apparent, or real good, it is in order that he may bestow upon them a hundredfold more than they have ever lost. See Matt. 19. 29.

III. Why, then, does the choice often seem so hard? And why do so many prefer the wide gate and the broad road to the "narrow way that leadeth unto life?" Why do so many reject the greater that they may keep the less? Because of the imperfect sight of the natural heart. The multitude will throng to gaze upon a display of fireworks, but will take no particular notice of the star that twinkles faintly in the depths of the midnight sky. And yet that star is a world to which our own earth is as nothing! But it is far away in the infinite distance, while the brilliant productions of man's skill fill the near range of vision. Just so do the pleasures and allurements of this present life dazzle the unrenewed mind, while the blessedness God has to bestow seems like a distant star, fair indeed, but too far removed to exercise any actual influence on the beholder.

It was "by faith" that Moses forsook Egypt. And what was this faith but the seeing of things in

the right light, the looking upon things from the heavenly point of view, and therefore estimating them according to God's estimate. The blessings of "the people of God" were no shadowy unrealities in the eyes of Moses. They were definite, they were tangible, they were worth the loss of all else. The reproach of Israel was to him the "reproach of Christ," the chosen one of God, and stood to him for all that was honorable and all that was to be desired. By casting in his lot with the chosen people he knew that he should share an inheritance of glory.

But how came he to know this? By simply believing God. The promise to Abraham and his seed was contrary to what the ordinary prophetic instinct of man would have expected. But Moses believed it. And because he believed it, it opened out to him and revealed wonderful depths and heights of glory and of blessing. It was the bright shining goal toward which his face was turned, which illumined the darkness around him, and to which the full blaze of Egyptian splendor appeared but as a flickering flame, shortly to vanish. And so by faith he gave up the passing pleasures of time, and chose the things which are eternal.

Often in the Bible is the right view of temporal and eternal things pointed out plainly. The one thing necessary is that a man believe. It is not "seeing is believing," but *believing is seeing*. With confidence the teacher may repeat the words, "Only believe," for he that believes has his eyes opened. The far-off things become near, and those that filled up the range of sight dwindle into comparative insignificance. One whose eyes have thus been opened has no longer the great choice to make. In believing he has chosen. And it needs only the same continued trust in God to enable such a one cheerfully to renounce whatever comes in the way of his Christian profession, for, having learned to estimate all things according to God's estimate, he knows that by so doing he is but *giving up the less for the greater*.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Four word-pictures: 1.) The Babe in the River; 2.) The Boy in the Palace; 3.) The Patriot in the Field; 4.) The Exile by the Well.... The teachings of the lesson concerning *opportunity* and its uses.... Concerning God's providence. (See Additional Practical Lessons.).... Wherein Moses appears our example: 1.) In his choice; 2.) In his self-sacrifice; 3.) In his faith.... Wherein Moses' conduct may be a warning—in his sudden anger; in unadvised action, etc.... The examples of the lesson: 1. Moses' mother—Faith; 2. Moses' sister—Tact; 3. Pharaoh's daughter—Sympathy; 4. Moses—Decision for God. **ILLUSTRATIONS.** The ark of bulrushes was like Caesar's boat in the storm, when the Roman general said to the pilot, "Fear not! Thou carriest Caesar and all his fortunes."... Moses, brought up in the palace of Pharaoh to deliver Israel from Pharaoh, was like the arrow plumed from the wing of the very eagle which it slew.... The little incident in which Moses' life was preserved illustrated by Mohammed, whose life, while flying from enemies, was saved by a spider spinning its web across the cave wherein he lay hidden; the web observed by his enemies led them to suppose no one was within the cave.... Moses' waiting in the palace illustrated by William the Silent, of Holland, quietly biding his time in the court of Charles V.... Moses' decision a picture of the greater self-sacrifice of Christ, who left the throne of heaven to save the world.

References. FOSTER'S PROSE. Vol. I. 33. Vol. II. 9603, 9915. POETICAL: Vol. I. 1995. Vol. II. 3783, 3786, 3794. FREEMAN: Bathing in the Nile, 104; The ark of bulrushes, 103.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. God sends Help. To be taught: 1.) That great results come from small causes. 2.) That God puts two ways before us, and we must choose which to take.

1. Show an acorn, or draw one, telling that the baby oak lies in this little acorn. Tell the story of the babe Moses, why the mother hid him and where, and how God took care of him, and put him where he could have both earthly and heavenly riches, since he had Pharaoh's daughter to provide for all his wants, and his own mother to teach him about the true God. Give familiar illustrations to show how great things are hid in small ones—a tree in an apple seed, etc. What must the acorn do to become an oak? *Grow*. What must a child do to become a man? *Grow*. We shall see in this lesson if Moses grew up toward God, or down toward the earth.

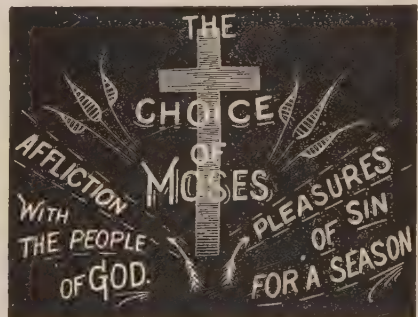


2. Tell how Moses, when he became a man, felt about the Israelites. Was he one of them? Yes, but he had always lived in the king's house, and was loved and honored. He might have stayed there, and perhaps been king himself some day. But he made a **CHOICE**. When you choose you take the one of two things that you want most. Talk about the Egyptians, their wealth, prosperity, and abundance. Then about the Israelites, their slavery, oppression, and trouble. What had they on their side? *They knew God*, and the Egyptians did not. Place the choice, "Sin, Earthly Riches," and "God, Heavenly Riches," on the board, and let children tell which Moses chose, and whether he did the best thing. Then tell the story of the outburst, the king's wrath, and the flight of Moses to another land. Teach that earthly riches are often found where there are heavenly riches, but those who have both must love the heavenly riches best, and use the earthly riches in doing good.

Print Lesson Thought, and use as a basis for a few review questions, and tell that in the next lesson we shall see how God was going to use Moses in sending help to the Israelites.

Blackboard.

BY J. E. PHIPPS, ESQ.



This illustration has two paths—one of affliction, the other of pleasure, showing the choice of Moses. It also shows him as a type of Christ. See the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. The application of the lesson touches on every-day sacrifices for Christ.

THE WISE CHOICE.
HERE THE CROSS. THERE THE CROWN.

B. C. 1491.]

LESSON III. THE CALL OF MOSES; or, The Lord's Presence.

[July 17.]

GENERAL STATEMENT.

Every element of the providential plan for the deliverance of Israel is now complete, and the day for decisive action has at last arrived. Forty years of still deeper oppression have followed the first vain attempt of Moses to arouse his countrymen to resistance; but now their sufferings have thoroughly alienated them from Egypt, made them willing to forsake the land of bondage, and disciplined them into strength for the possession of their inheritance. Afar in the Promised Land the iniquity of the Canaanites, too, has been mounting higher with the passing centuries, and now the cup of wrath is almost full, and the sword of a just judgment is being unsheathed. For forty years Moses has been leading the quiet life of a shepherd in Midian, until his impetuous spirit has been chastened into humility and dependence upon the Almighty. Pasturing his flock in the vales of the wilderness he has gained a knowledge of the region, destined to be of inestimable service during the years of wandering. The hour has come, and the man is ready. As Moses leads his flock by the mountain, destined soon to quake and to smoke with the sound of the law, he beholds a strange sight, a bush burning, yet unconsumed. He draws near, and hears a voice from the flame, proclaiming the divine presence, and summoning him to the work of liberating his people from Egyptian bondage and leading them into their promised inheritance. The experience of forty years has so transformed him who once was ready to smite down the oppressor, that he hesitates, not from fear of man, but from a shrinking timidity and distrust of his own ability for so great a task. He is reassured by the revelation of the divine Name and character, and once more commanded to go back to the land of bondage, and, single-handed, undertake the deliverance of Israel.

Exod. 3. 1-14.

[Memory Verses, 10-12.]

1 Now Mo'ses kept the flock of Je'thro his father-in-law, the priest of Mid'a-an; and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Ho'reb.

2 And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

Acts 7. 30: And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. Isa. 10. 17: And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame.

3 And Mo'ses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

Psa. 111. 2: The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. Jas. 4. 8: Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Mo'ses, Mo'ses. And he said, Here am I.

Gen. 46. 2: And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob! and he said, Here am I. 1 Sam. 3. 10: And the LORD came, and stood and called—Samuel, Samuel! Then Samuel answered, Speak: for thy servant heareth.

5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Eccles. 5. 1: Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools. Josh. 5. 15: And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.

6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of A-bra-ham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Mo'ses hid his face: for he was afraid to look upon God.

7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in E'gypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows:

Explanatory and Practical.

Verses 1, Now. The date of this lesson is forty years after the close of the last. Moses is now eighty years old. **Moses kept the flock.** Though of high rank, yet he was not ashamed of a lowly employment. (1) *Honest work is always noble.* "Moses saw more of God while he was tending sheep in the desert, than ever he had seen in Pharaoh's palace." **Jethro.** Some have supposed this to be the same person as Reuel, in the previous chapter, (2. 18), but the latest authorities incline to regard him as Reuel's son, who had succeeded to the rule and priesthood on the death of his father, and was therefore Moses' brother-in-law. **Father-in-law.** The original word is indefinite, meaning simply "a relation by marriage," and may be translated "brother-in-law." **Priest of Midian.** See note on ver. 15, last lesson. The priestly and princely offices were united in one person among many of the ancient races. **Back side.** The Hebrews were accustomed to regard the east or place of sunrise as "front," and the west as "behind," so that this would mean "on the western side of the wilderness," as **desert** is a name applied to any uncultivated, unsettled region, such as that around Mount Sinai. **The mountain of God.** The mountain around which, a few months after this event, the camp of Israel was pitched, and on whose summit the glory of the Lord was revealed in the proclamation of the law. **Ho'reb.** The name of the mountain district in the southern part of the peninsula of which Sinai was a single peak. (2) *Once God revealed himself in special places, but all the earth now is holy ground since the Son of man has sanctified it.*

2, 3. The angel of the Lord. "A manifestation of God by the agency of a created being."—*Speaker's Com.* Moses saw the flame, but heard from it the voice of the invisible God. **A bush.** The *seneh*, or "thorn-bush," a kind of acacia, common in the Sinaitic peninsula, growing in thickets, and armed with stout, sharp thorns. **Burned...not consumed.** The lowly bramble was a type of Israel, in the fiery trials of Egypt, yet unconsumed, because God was in the midst of her. (3) *God's Church is ever passing through the fire, yet never destroyed.* (4) *When God is with his people, fires of affliction can only scale off their earthly dross and make them all the purer.* **I will now turn aside.** The curiosity of Moses to see the great sight was made the means of his call to his great mission. (5) *So God uses the common desires of men to open their hearts for the highest spiritual privileges.* Many a man who has gone to church from curiosity has there found God.

4, 5. The Lord saw. The same appearance called "angel," in verse 2, is here spoken of as "Lord" and "God." **God called.** When God spoke to Moses he was not at worship, but at his common, every-day work. (6) *So God communes with those whom he finds at their post of duty, whether shepherds in the field, (Luke 2. 8,) or priests in the temple. Luke 1. 11. Said Moses.* Two hundred, perhaps four hundred, years, had passed since God had spoken to his people. (See Gen. 46. 2 for the last recorded manifestation.) But now, in the hour of their deepest extremity, God appears once more. (7) *God always comes when his people need him most.* (8) *When God speaks it is always to the individual, calling men by name.* [Teacher, show in what ways God speaks to people at the present time.] **Draw not nigh.** "We must come to God; we must not come too near him."—*Bishop Hall.* **Put off thy shoes.** Rather, "sandals," covering the soles of the feet. The Orientals always remove their slippers on occasions when we would take off our hats; and the priests in the temple officiated with bare feet. **Holy ground.** A place hallowed by the immediate and visible presence of the Most High.

6, 7. The God of thy father. "The God whom thy father worshipped and taught thee to worship." (9) *The God whom the father serves will have a strong hold on the children.* Whether the father serves the Lord, or makes a god of the world, or of rum, or of pleasure, his children are apt to follow in his footsteps. **The God of Abraham.** And hence the God who sustained covenant-relations with Abraham's descendants, to whom he was now about to fulfill the promises made to their ancestors. **Hide his face.** (10) *The purest of men may tremble when brought in presence of the infinite holiness of God.* (11) *Only through Christ can we venture to approach the throne.* **I have surely seen.** They deemed their bitter lot unnoticed by the Lord, yet he had watched it all the while, and longed to assist them as soon as they should come to that condition of self-distrust and turning from the world which would make his help their greatest blessing. (12) *God sees our troubles when we often think he has forgotten us.* **Heard their cry.**

8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the E-gyp'tians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land, and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaan-ites, and the Hiv'tites, and the Am'o-rites, and the Per'iz-zites, and the Hiv'tites, and the Jeb'u-sites.

9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Is'ra-el is come unto me; and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the E-gyp'tians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pha'raoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Is'ra-el, out of E'gypt

11 And Mo'ses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pha'raoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Is'ra-el out of E'gypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee: and this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of E'gypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 And Mo'ses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Is'ra-el, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Mo'ses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Is'ra-el, I AM hath sent me unto you.

In the years of ease they had well-nigh forgotten the God of their fathers, and only by affliction were they led to call upon him. (13) *Blessed is that sorrow which turns hearts toward the Lord! I know their sorrows.* The language expresses the idea of sympathy, a feeling for them and with them in their troubles.

8, 9. **I am come down.** In the sense of special manifestations of his power, with grace toward his people and judgments upon his foes. **A good land and a large.** Good in its capacity to supply their needs, and large as compared with the narrow limits of Goshen. **Flowing with milk and honey.** Abounding in grass for flocks and abundant in products. Such was Palestine anciently, and such it might be again with good government and an industrious population. **Canaanites.** A general name for the races then inhabiting the land of promise, since most of them were of Hamitic origin. **Hittites.** A powerful people, mostly dwelling north of Canaan, but occupying some of its plains. They are referred to in many ancient inscriptions by the name *Kheta*. **Amorites.** "Mountaineers." They were the principal inhabitants of the "hill country of Judah" and the Jordan valley. **Perizzites.** A race dwelling in small settlements in the center of Palestine, and probably roaming through the country. **Hivites.** A peaceful race, mostly north of the Sea of Tiberias. **Jebusites.** Occupying Jerusalem and the surrounding country. **I have seen the oppression.** (13) *God not only marks the wrongs of his people, but the wrong-doings of their oppressors.*

10, 11, 12. **Pharaoh.** Probably Thotmes II, the great grandson of Aahmes or Amosis, the original oppressor. **Thou mayest bring forth.** A great work is laid before him, to organize an insurrection of an enslaved race against the nation at that time most powerful in the world. **Who am I?** Moses, who had once been eager to lead his people out to instant resistance, now realizes the vastness of the work and his own unfitness to accomplish it. His shrinking, however, is not from fear, but from sincere consciousness of human weakness. (14) *He who is most humble is best fitted to do God's work.* **I will be with thee.** And with God by his side one man is mightier than all the world arrayed against him. **A token.** The meaning is, that in the future result he should see the evidence of a divine commission. **Serve God.** "Worship God." That is, he was now to go forth to his great work in simple faith, and when, in a year afterward, he should worship God at that same place with the emancipated Israelites, he would recognize that his call had been from the Lord.

13, 14. **What is his name?** Either that the children of Israel had sunk so low, that the mass of them had forgotten the God of their fathers, and would not recognize his call without a new revelation; or that this mighty work required some clearer knowledge of the divine character. **I AM THAT I AM.** A free translation of the name *Jehovah*. "I am he who is." The name may have been already known to the Israelites, but it received now an import not before realized, as "the self-existent One," the Being of eternal and unchanging life and power.

HOME READINGS.

- M. God's call to Moses. Exod. 3. 1-14.
Th. God's call to Abram. Gen. 12. 1-8.
W. God's call to Joshua. Josh. 1. 1-9.
Th. God's call to Gideon. Judges 6. 11-24.
F. God's call to Samuel. 1 Sam. 3. 1-21.
S. God's call to Isaiah. Isa. 6. 1-13.
S. God's call to Paul. Acts 9. 1-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Certainly I will be with thee. Exod. 3. 12.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 158.

There is a safe and secret place
Beneath the wings divine;
Reserved for all the heirs of grace;
O be that refuge mine!
The least and feeblest there may
bide,
Uninjured and unawed;
While thousands fall on every side
He rests secure in God.

He feeds in pastures large and fair
Of love and truth divine;
O child of God, O glory's heir,
How rich a lot is thine!

TIME.—B. C. 1491, when Moses was eighty years old.

PLACE.—Mount Horeb, or Sinai, in the wilderness.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. The marriage of Moses. Exod. 2. 16-22. 2. His shepherd life for forty years. Exod. 3. 1.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The divine personality.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. A Divine Manifestation, v. 1-6.

What was the occupation of Moses in Midian?

What persons in Scripture history, of that occupation, have been honored by God? 1 Sam. 16. 11; Luke 2. 8.

What does this honor show? 1 Cor. 1. 27-29.

What traits of character did Moses show in this vocation?

Where did Moses lead the flock?

Why was this place called "the mountain of God?"

Who appeared to Moses, and in what form?

Why was this form appropriate and significant?

How did God address Moses?

How does this show God's notice and knowledge of individuals?

What was God's command to Moses? v. 5.

In what respect was it holy ground?

What places are holy ground now?

By what name did God speak to Moses?

Why did he name the patriarchs with himself?

How did Christ refer to this name of God? Matt. 22. 32.

2. A Divine Mission, v. 7-10.

How did God regard the affliction of the Israelites?

Why, then, had he suffered it so long?

What is taught in Psa. 142. 3?

In what sense did God "come down?"

What was he about to do for Israel?

What the character of the land to be possessed by Israel?

What is said of it in Deut. 8. 7-9?

What nations were at that time in Canaan?

Upon what ground of justice were these nations dispossessed? Deut. 9. 5.

Why were the Israelites chosen as God's people?

What comfort may the troubled find in v. 9?

What was the mission which God gave to Moses?

3. A Divine Message, v. 11-14.

How did Moses receive God's call?

What reasons for his hesitation could be named?

What counsel do we find in Prov. 29. 25, and Eph. 6. 10?

What promise of God was sufficient for all Moses' needs? [GOLDEN TEXT.]

What is said in Rom. 8. 31?

What was to be the token that his mission came from God?

What question did Moses expect from the people?



What does this show as to their ignorance of God?
By what name did God reveal himself?
How does this name reveal God's nature? Rev. 1. 4.

Practical Teachings.

How does this lesson teach—1. To whom God reveals himself? 2. How God regards his people? 3. What God expects of his workers?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. A Divine Manifestation, v. 1-6.

What was the occupation of Moses in Midian?

How long was he a shepherd?

Acts 7. 30.

How did this show a spirit of contentment? Phil. 4. 11.

To what place did he lead the flock?



What was this mountain called, and why?

What other name is given to it? [Ans. Mount Sinai.]

What did Moses see on the mountain?

Why was this a strange sight?

Who spoke to Moses from the bush?

What did he say?

What other persons did God call by name? Gen. 22.

11: 46. 2; 1 Sam. 3. 6; Acts 9. 4.

How does God call people now?

What did God command Moses to do, and why?

Through whom may we come to God? Eph. 2. 13.

Whom did God declare himself to be?

2. A Divine Mission, v. 7-10.

What did God say that he had seen?

How may this be a comfort to God's people? Job 23. 10.

Does God hear his people's cry?

What did he promise to do?

Does God keep his promises? 2 Cor. 1. 20.

To what land did he promise to lead them?

What was Moses' divine mission?

3. A Divine Message, v. 11-14.

How did Moses receive his mission?

How did God encourage him? GOLDEN TEXT.

What is said in Rom. 8. 31?

What sign was promised to him?

How was this fulfilled? Exod. 19. 2, 3, 8.

What did Moses ask in v. 13?

What answer was Moses to give the people?

What did this name mean?

How would this name encourage the people?

How is God spoken of in Isa. 40. 28?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we find—1. That God speaks to men? 2. That God sees all our troubles? 3. That God keeps all his promises?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

1. A Divine Manifestation, v. 1-6.

What is a "manifestation?" An appearance, or what may be seen.

What appearance is here spoken of? God showing himself to Moses.

Where was God seen by Moses? At Mount Horeb in the wilderness.

How did God show himself to Moses? In a burning bush.

What did God tell Moses? That the place was holy ground.

Who did God say that he was? The God of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

How did Moses feel? He was afraid to look upon God.

2. A Divine Mission, v. 7-10.

What did God tell Moses? That he had seen all the troubles of Israel.

What did he say that he would do? That he would lead them out from bondage.

Where did he say that he would lead Israel? To the land of Canaan.

What did God call this land? "A land flowing with milk and honey."

What did this mean? That it was fruitful and pleasant.

What did God command Moses to do? To go to Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

For what purpose was he to go to Pharaoh? To bring Israel out of Egypt.

3. A Divine Message, v. 11-14.

What did Moses say in answer to God's call? "Who am I, to bring Israel out of Egypt?"

What did God say to encourage him? [GOLDEN TEXT.]

By what name did God say he would be known to Israel? By the name "I AM THAT I AM."

What was Moses to say to the people? "I AM hath sent me unto you."

Words with Little People.

- Remember that God speaks to you out of his word.
- Remember that God meets you when you pray to him.
- Remember that God sees the sorrows of his people.
- Remember that God helps those who do his will.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

- How long did Moses live in Midian? **Forty years.**
- What life did he lead during that period? **The life of a shepherd.**
- To what place did he at one time lead his flock? **To Horeb, the mount of God.**
- How did God appear to him there? **In a burning bush.**
- What did God command him to do? **To lead Israel out of Egypt.**
- By what name did God proclaim himself? **"I AM THAT I AM."**

THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

I. GOD. § 2. THE PERSONS OF GOD.

13. *Are there more Gods than one?* "There is none other God but one."—1 Cor. 8. 4.

14. *Are there more persons in the Godhead than one?* There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are ONE.—1 John 5. 7.

15. *Is the Father God?* "To us there is but one God, the Father."—1 Cor. 8. 6.

16. *Is the Son God?* Christ "is over all, God blessed forever." He is the true God.—Rom. 9. 5; 1 John 5. 20.

17. *Is the Holy Ghost God?* The Holy Ghost is "the Eternal Spirit."—Heb. 9. 14.

18. *In what name are Christians baptized?* In the name of the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—Matt. 28. 19.

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Being in the Bush.

I. A DIVINE BEING.

God called....out of....the bush. v. 4.

"In the bush God spake." Mark 12. 26.

II. A HOLY BEING.

The place is....holy ground. v. 5.

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord." Isa. 6. 3.

III. AN ALL-SEEING BEING.

I have surely seen the affliction. v. 7.

"He knoweth the way that I take." Job 23. 10.

IV. A LOVING BEING.

I know their sorrows. v. 7.

"In all their afflictions....afflicted." Isa. 63. 9.

V. A MIGHTY BEING.

I am come down to deliver. v. 8.

"I am the almighty God." Gen. 17. 1.

VI. A JUST BEING.

I have also seen the oppression. v. 9.

"Just and right is he." Deut. 32. 4.

VII. A SELF-EXISTENT BEING.

God said....I AM THAT I AM. v. 14.

"Before Abraham was....I am." John 8. 58.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The Call of God.

- While God calls all men to his service, there are those whom he calls for a special work. v. 1, 2.
- God's special call comes to men whom God has endowed and trained for their life-work. v. 1, 2.
- God's call comes to men in ordinary and lowly vocations, summoning them to higher tasks. v. 1, 2.

4. God's call is accompanied with revelations proportioned to the greatness and difficulty of the task required. v. 2-5.

5. God's call, with its accompanying revelations, recognizes and confirms his previous covenants. v. 6.

6. God's call is definite and distinct to a specific work. v. 8-10.

7. God's call is not to ease and enjoyment, but to danger and difficulty. v. 10.

8. God's call comes not to those conscious of power, but to those who realize their own weakness.

9. God's call is accompanied by promises of his own presence and help.

English Teacher's Notes.

THE passage introduces us to one who for forty years (chap. 7. 7.) has led a quiet, uneventful life. He is employed in keeping the sheep of his father-in-law, Jethro, and we find him leading them from place to place to find fresh pasture. The careful shepherd is Moses, once a royal prince of Egypt; and his present position is the consequence of the choice which we considered in the last lesson.

We are not told what intercourse he was able to have with his people and his kindred during these long years. That some communication passed between him and them is probable, for Midian was neither too far distant, nor too much cut off from civilized countries to render this impossible. And from chap. 4. 14, 27, we may infer that Moses and his elder brother Aaron were not strangers to one another. But whatever news may have come to him from the land whence he had fled, there was nothing to awaken any hope or arouse in him any of his former energy.

To him, in the wild and awful solitude of Sinai, is the sudden call given: "Come . . . I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt."

It was a startling command. Forty years before he had made an attempt to undertake the deliverance of his nation; but he had utterly failed. Since then the bondage had pressed upon them more heavily than ever, and their condition must have appeared increasingly hopeless. And he himself was now a man getting into years, living in obscurity, well nigh forgotten at the court of Egypt, and who had himself well nigh forgotten the ways and manners of the great. Fit as he had once appeared for the performance of such a work, *unfit* he must now seem to the eye of man. But "the Lord seeth not as man seeth." God's appointed time had come, and his servant had been prepared.

Look for a moment at the work Moses was commissioned to do. Look at its difficulty. He had to rouse a people sunk deep in slavery, to break a yoke which had become firmly fixed, to undo eighty years of oppression. What success could the exile expect with the people who had spurned him when he came to them in his youth and strength? How could he hope that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, would even listen for a moment to his message? And look at the danger. The king had sought to slay him when his first attempt was made. Would not the hand of every Egyptian be raised against him now?

How then was Moses to face the difficulty and the danger of his errand?

He had a talisman given him which was potent to carry him through it all. This talisman is revealed in our Golden Text: "*Certainly I will be with thee.*" And of its power Moses had just beheld a striking picture. He had seen the dry thorn-bush, fit prey, it would seem, for the tiniest flame to feed upon and ultimately to devour. He had seen it stand wrapped in flame, a weird and brilliant sight, yet without one twig injured. Out of this bush came the Voice which spake, "*Certainly I will be with thee.*" And his thoughts must have recurred to his own people in the "iron furnace" of Egypt, persecuted, yet not diminished in number, "cast down, but not destroyed." How had they been preserved until now? By the presence of God. Here was the talisman which ensured his success.

He did not at first appreciate its full worth. Once he had been too confident in himself. When he "went out unto his brethren and looked on their burdens" the "I" of youthful energy and daring was strong within him. Now it was exactly the reverse. The youthful fire was gone, but another "I" arose to assert itself—the "I" of shrinking unfitness and despondency. "Who am I?" is his answer to the call of God. And although the promise immediately follows, and directs his attention away from himself, yet the "I" is again brought forward: "Behold when I come . . . what shall I say unto them?" See also chap. 4. 1, 10. The man who at last went forth, not in his own strength, but trusting in Him who sent him, found all obstacles gradually melt away before his advance.

Here is a lesson, (1) for those who hesitate to start in the Christian life; (2) for those who have started, and (3) for those who have as yet no intention of starting.

For those who hesitate to start. "How can I trust in Christ for the forgiveness of my sin? I shall go and do wrong next day," was the despairing utterance of one in whose ear the Gospel call had been sounding. It was the "I" of Moses over again, the thought turned in upon the poor, wretched, helpless self, instead of rising to Him who "shall save His people from their sins." "Do you think it possible for me to lead a Christian life?" was the sad and anxious question of one whose surroundings seemed greatly against her. The difficulties looked too formidable, the obstacles insurmountable. But the "Certainly I will be with thee," was, in this case, grasped, and the talisman did not fail.

For those who have started. The life of a Christian can never be one of careless ease. He has a path to tread which is directly contrary to the ways of this world, he has a "charge to keep" which is of priceless importance, a work to do of which the issues are eternal. And he must do this in the face of an enemy, cruel, fierce, and threatening. In himself he is utterly insufficient, but the promise will carry him through.

For those who have as yet no intention of starting.

They have, perhaps, no desire to choose the Lord's path, or keep the Lord's charge, or do the Lord's work. And, therefore, they feel no need of the Lord's presence. But there are things before them which they know they must face, and of which they have a secret dread. They know they are not exempt from the common lot of humanity. Their turn will come for trouble, for pain, for sorrow, for death. And they cannot contemplate these without shrinking and fear. Would not a charm, whereby the bitter waters are made sweet, be worth having? Would not a talisman which gives the victory over all evil, be of inestimable value? There is such a one to be had. Make good your claim to the promise: "Certainly I will be with thee," and the talisman is yours.

But how may such a claim be advanced, much less made good? Very simply. God is now calling to those who are afar off. The call comes to them as truly as it did to Moses. Only his was a call to service, while theirs is to conversion. The voice divine bids them "Turn," "Repent," "Come," and it is the voice of One who for them gave up his only begotten Son. Rom. 8. 32. They who obey that call may claim the promise as surely as Moses did, for there is never a call given but the promise goes with it.

And what will the talisman avail in the hour of trial and suffering? "The bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Job 5. 19. That precious promise, "I . . . with thee," repeated so many times in the Bible, (Gen. 26. 3, 24; 28. 15; 31. 3; 46. 4; Josh. 1. 5; 3. 7; Judges 6. 16; Isa. 41. 10; 43. 5; Jer. 1. 8; 30. 11; 46. 28; Matt. 28. 20; Acts 18. 10,) shall unfold a radiance never beheld in the hour of ease and comfort.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw a map of the wilderness, and locate *Midian*, *Horeb*, *Sinai*. . . A map of Canaan before the conquest, and locate the races occupying it. . . Show how Moses' life in Midian prepared him for his work as a leader. . . The teachings of the burning bush. 1.) The bush, God's people. 2.) The fire, persecution. 3.) Unconsumed. 4.) The Lord's presence. . . The divine attributes as here shown. (See Analytical and Biblical Outlines.) . . . The divine call. 1.) From whom. 2.) To whom. 3.) How revealed. 4.) To what work. . . Teachings concerning duty. 1.) The duty of industry. 2.) The duty of patience, waiting for God's will. (Moses waited forty years.) 3.) The duty of trust. 4.) The duty of reverence. 5.) The duty of prayer. (ver. 7.) 6.) The duty of righteousness. (ver. 9.) 7.) The duty of obedience. 8.) The duty of knowing God. . . ILLUSTRATIONS. In Home Readings five illustrations of God calling men to duty. . . Various forms of divine appearance to men in Scripture, to Abraham, Jacob, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Paul. . . Instances of God's people enduring persecution: Catacombs of Rome; Bloody Mary of England; Covenanters of Scotland, etc. . . A description of Mount Sinai as it appears at present. . . Moses a shepherd, Christ a carpenter, Paul making tents. . . ver. 7. "I have surely seen," etc. Christ saw the disciples at midnight toiling in rowing. (Mark 6. 48.) . . . Moses going out alone to save a nation. St. Theresa going to Paris to establish a hospital for the poor, was asked, "How much money have you?" "Three sous." "That is nothing for so great an undertaking?" She answered, "Theresa and three sous are nothing; but Theresa, three sous, and God are every thing!"

References. FOSTER'S PROSE: Vol. I. 2555, 4568, 6201. Vol. II. 7040, 11678, 12309. POETICAL: Vol. I. 1765. Vol. II. 3207, 3765, 3795. FREEMAN: Varied pasture grounds, 106; Shoes removed, 107; Covering the face, 316; Religion of names, 7.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. God Calls Every One.



2. Tell how the angel appeared in the burning bush, and Moses turned aside to see what it meant. He was not so busy but that he could stop to see what God was doing. Are we ever too busy with our work or play to stop and listen to God? Tell what God said, and the reply of Moses, and read from the Bible from the sixth to the eleventh verse, simplifying, questioning, and sometimes letting children repeat, clauses and words. Put a heart with the word "Open" in it, on the board, and ask who had such a heart, and to what it was open, telling that if Moses' heart had not been open, he would have been too busy to talk with God, or, perhaps, too much afraid.

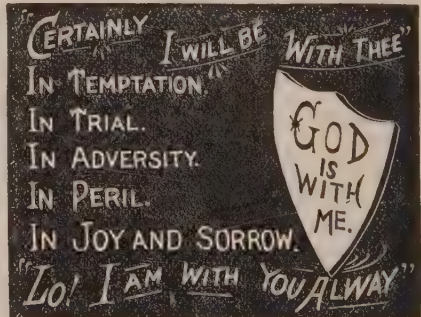


3. Read the answer of Moses, and the promise of God. Why did Moses feel that he could not go to the king? Tell that this was another Pharaoh, as wicked and cruel as the one Moses had run away from. Had Moses any power? No, and the king had great power. Tell what kind of power the king had, and contrast this with God's power which was promised to Moses. Tell what the pillar of fire meant—protection and guidance, and illustrate by a light on a dark path, a camp fire when one sleeps in the woods, a wall around a city.

CLOSING EXERCISE. Print Lesson Thought. Has God called you? What did you answer? Get class to name some things that he calls children to be and to do, and teach that all right being and doing is for God.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



This diagram needs no explanation, and the lesson taught is plain. It will be profitable to call for some of the promises of God that relate to his care for man.

IF GOD BE FOR US WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?

B. C. 1491.]

LESSON IV. MOSES AND AARON; or, The Chosen Leaders.

[July 24.]

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The doubts and fears of Moses concerning his mission were slowly dispelled from his mind by a series of miracles. His hand became pale with leprosy in an instant, and as suddenly was cleansed; his rod was transformed into a serpent, and the serpent became a rod once more: as tokens which would prove, to himself, his people, and the oppressors, that he spoke from the Lord. His hesitant utterance and lack of eloquence was promised the assistance of his brother Aaron's persuasive lips, and, finally, he is assured that the generation which long before had rejected his leadership, and sought his life, have gone down to their grave. So at last he bids farewell to Midian, and turns his footsteps toward the land of bondage, which he has not seen in forty years. At the same time a movement is taking place among the oppressed people in Egypt, led by Aaron, who is divinely directed to go toward his brother in the wilderness. At the mount of God the two venerable brothers meet with affectionate greetings, and together form their plans for the liberation of their people. They first call together the elders of Israel, and show them the signs that God has looked upon their sufferings, and has come to set them free. With bowed heads the people receive the message, and a new hope springs up in their hearts. Then the brothers enter the palace of Pharaoh, and present their moderate request, in the name of Israel's God, that the people may go into the wilderness for a religious service. To grant their petition would recognize the authority of Jehovah, and the king of Egypt spurns them from his presence, with contempt for their God and insults to his servants. The only result of their meeting with Pharaoh is that new burdens are heaped upon the oppressed people, and their hearts sink once more into despair.

Exod. 4. 27-5. 4.

[Memory verses 29-31.]

27 And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Mo'ses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.

Gen. 27. 26: And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. Gen. 50. 1: And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2 Sam. 20. 9: And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. Matt. 26. 49: And forthwith [Judas] came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him. Acts 20. 37: And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him.

28 And Mo'ses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

29 And Mo'ses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel:

30 And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Mo'ses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

Exod. 4. 16: He shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be...to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

31 And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

1 And afterward Mo'ses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

Psa. 105. 26, 27: He sent Moses his servant; and Aaron whom he had chosen: they showed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

2 And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

Exod. 3. 19: I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

3 And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days'

Explanatory and Practical.

Verse 27. The Lord said. Moses was already on his way from Midian when his divine direction came to his brother in Egypt. **Aaron.** He was eighty-three years old, and having spent his life among the Israelites was fully acquainted with them and possessed influence over them. It is probable that he had been at work preparing for the coming struggle. His experience and ready utterance were of great service to Moses in the deliverance of the people, but he was easily controlled by circumstances and not qualified for leadership. **Go into the wilderness.** He is directed where to find Moses, as otherwise he might have undertaken the longer and useless journey to Midian. **In the mount of God.** One journeying eastward and the other westward, they met at Mount Sinai. **Kissed him.** The embrace was mutual, and according to Oriental forms of greeting. The brothers may have met many times during the forty years, and conferred concerning the interests of their people.

28, 29. The Lord who had sent. Rather, "which God had charged him to do," a more literal translation. **All the signs.** The miracles of the leprous hand and the shepherd's staff changed into a serpent, as proofs of the divine commission. See vers. 2-7. **Moses and Aaron went.** Henceforth the work of liberation was carried on by the two brothers in a spirit of unity, Moses being the leader, and Aaron the spokesman. (1) *God's workers should be united in their efforts, and free from jealousy.* **All the elders.** The Israelites still maintained the patriarchal system, and the heads of the tribes and families exercised jurisdiction, subject to the Egyptian authorities. **Aaron spake.** Not only because more gifted in speech, but being better known to the people than Moses, who had been in exile during an entire generation. **Did the signs.** Aaron was to work the miracles before Pharaoh, and it was proper that he should show them to the Israelites, as Moses' representative. **Sight of the people.** Before the elders representing the people; though a public assembly of the families may have been summoned for the purpose.

31. The people believed. Recognizing the works as divine and the messengers as coming from God, whom they still worshipped, with more or less knowledge of his attributes and of the covenant-destiny of Israel. (2) *Trouble, often than ease, brings men to faith in God.* **The Lord had visited.** In their distress they had deemed themselves forsaken by their God, but now they recognize him as returning for their deliverance. (3) *God is always nearer than even his people realize.* **Bowed their heads.** In token of reverence, faith, and their willingness to obey the divine will. (4) *When men are bowed down then God lifts them up.* **Worshipped.** Not an act of obeisance to Moses and Aaron, but of thankfulness and prayer to God. (5) *Notice the steps of faith:* 1.) *Hearing;* 2.) *Beholding;* 3.) *Believing;* 4.) *Praying;* 5.) *Praising.*

1. Went in. To the presence of the king, doubtless accompanied by a delegation of the elders of Israel. **Pharaoh.** Probably Thothmes II., who was residing at Zoan or Tanis, in Lower Egypt, adjoining the Land of Goshen. He was a man of vacillating character, but influenced by the stronger nature of his wife Hatson, who was also his sister, such marriages being not unusual in ancient Egypt. **Thus saith the Lord God.** It would be preferable to read, "Jehovah God of Israel." To his countryman, Moses speaks of "the God of their fathers;" to Pharaoh, he employs the title, "God of Israel." (6) *God is never ashamed to own his people, even when they are abused.* (7) *That nation is loftier than all others, whatever its earthly estate, which can call Jehovah its God.* **Let my people go.** The request at first is not for independence and privilege of departure, but for toleration of religious worship, which must of necessity take place beyond the frontiers of Egypt, since the offerings would consist of animals never slain by the Egyptians. Yet it contained the principle of recognizing the supremacy of Israel's God and his right to obedience even from Pharaoh and his subjects. **A feast.** A sacred festival with worship and sacrifice. The petition was offered, with the foreknowledge of its rejection, because a slight matter would show the arrogant and unbelieving character of Pharaoh as well as a great demand.

2. Who is the Lord. "Who is Jehovah?" that is, what right has the God of so low and helpless a people to expect me to heed his requests? (8) *He greatly errs who estimates the power of God by the earthly condition*

journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.

Exod. 10. 9: And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go: for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. Deut. 28. 15, 21, 22: But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.... the Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee.... the Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Mo'ses and Aa'ron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

of his people. I know not the Lord. "I know not Jehovah." Not that he had never heard of him, though that is possible, but rather that he recognized no allegiance to him. (9) *Slaves of sin are always boasting of their independence of God.*

3. **The God of the Hebrews.** The Israelites were generally called Hebrews by other nations, and hence so called themselves in dealing with strangers. See notes on Lesson II., ver. 6. **Met with us.** They recognized the voice of God in the messengers whom he had sent. **We pray thee.** They do not meet scorn with scorn, but continue a respectful form of address. **Three days' journey.** About fifty or sixty miles. **Into the desert.** The wilderness, not necessarily an arid waste of sand. **Sacrifice.** As in Egypt they could not offer sacrifices with freedom. "They said nothing about forsaking Egypt altogether, perhaps with a view to learn from the manner in which he treated a smaller request what prospect they would have in urging a greater." **Fall upon us with pestilence.** (10) *Disobedience to God's law has more than one avenger.* The plague has been known from immemorial time in the East. **Or the sword.** As Goshen was on the frontier, it was exposed to invasion more than any other part of Egypt.

4. **Wherefore.... let the people.** The word "let" has here its old meaning of "hinder." He treated them as seditious demagogues, stirring up a spirit of discontent among the working class. **Get you to your burdens.** This was addressed to the Israelite elders who were with Moses and Aaron, though it may indicate that the leaders, too, ought to be at work among their people. The first result of their effort at liberation was an increase in their burdens, since, with no decrease in the "tale of bricks," they were compelled to find their own straw.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Moses and Aaron. Exod. 4. 27-5. 4.
Th. The command to Moses. Exod. 3. 15-22.
W. The tokens of authority. Exod. 4. 1-9.
Th. The mission of Aaron. Exod. 4. 10-23.
F. The Lord and the idols. Isa. 44. 1-20.
S. The Lord's covenant. Jer. 31. 31-37.
S. The acceptable sacrifice. Psa. 50. 1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen. Psa. 105. 26.

LESSON HYMN. S. M.

Hymnal, No. 821.

How beautiful are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill,
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal!
How happy are our ears,
That hear the joyful sound,
Which kings and prophets waited for,
And sought, but never found!

The Lord makes bare his arm
Through all the earth abroad;
Let every nation now behold
Their Saviour and their God.

TIME.—B. C. 1491.

PLACE.—Egypt, probably near Zoan.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. The signs given to Moses. Exod. 4. 1-17. 2. The return of Moses to Egypt. Exod. 4. 18-26.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The divine authority.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Leaders, v. 27, 28.

Who was Aaron?
How much older than Moses was he? Exod. 7. 7.
Why was he chosen to assist Moses? Exod. 4. 14.
What part in the work was he to do? Exod. 4. 15, 16.
What did God command to Aaron?
What had Moses already done? Exod. 4. 20.
Where and how did the two brothers meet?
What did Moses relate to Aaron?

2. The People, v. 29-31.

What was the first act of the leaders?
Who were the elders?
Who spoke to them?
What did he tell them?
What signs did he show? Exod. 4. 2-7.
How did these signs prove their mission?
In what spirit were they received by the people?
How did they show their gratitude and faith?

3. The King, v. 1-4.

What was the next step in the release of the Israelites?
What was the Pharaoh who had first oppressed the people? Exod. 2. 23.

In whose name did Moses and Aaron address Pharaoh?

What did they ask?
Why was this a proper request?
What was Pharaoh's answer?
What spirit did it show?
In what form was the request renewed?
What did they desire to take with them? Exod. 10. 9.
What did they fear, as the result of disobeying God?
What lesson for nations is here found?
What was the answer of the king?
How did he show the wickedness of his heart? v. 6-8.

Practical Teachings.

Wherein does this lesson teach us—1. How brothers should act toward each other? 2. How God's message should be delivered? 3. How God's words are often received?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Leaders, v. 27, 28.

What two leaders are here named?
Who was Aaron?
What part did he have in the leadership? Exod. 4. 15, 16.
What did he afterward become? Exod. 28. 1.
What did God command Aaron to do?
Where did he meet Moses?
How did he feel when he met his brother? Exod. 4. 14.
What did Moses tell Aaron?
What did he show him?
What were these signs and their purpose? Exod. 4. 5-7.

Why does not God give such signs now? [Ans. Because we have the Bible, and do not need them.]

2. The People, v. 29-31.

What was the first act of Moses and Aaron?
Who were the elders?
Why did Aaron speak the words rather than Moses?
What did he show them?
How did the people receive their message?
How did they show their faith?
How were they comforted in their troubles?
Where may we find a message from God?
How should we receive it?

3. The King, v. 1-4.

To whom did Moses and Aaron go?
What did they ask of Pharaoh?
How did this show their courage and their faith?
Who are here called God's people?
Who are now his people? 2 Cor. 6. 16.
Why did they wish to go to the wilderness?
How did Pharaoh answer them?
How did he show contempt for God?
Who are like Pharaoh?
What did Moses and Aaron then say?
What did the king command the people?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where does this lesson show—1. The spirit of brotherly love? 2. The spirit of faith in God? 3. The spirit of disobedience toward God?



QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

1. The Leaders, v. 27, 28.

Who were the leaders of the children of Israel? **Moses and his brother Aaron.**

How old were they? **Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three.**

Where did they meet each other? **At Horeb, the Mount of God.**

What did Moses tell Aaron? **All the words that God had spoken.**

What did he show to Aaron? **The signs which God had given.**

What were these signs? **Miracles wrought by God.**

What is said of Moses and Aaron in the GOLDEN TEXT?

2. The People, v. 29-31.

How did Moses and Aaron begin their work in Egypt? **They called together the elders of Israel.**

What was done next? **Aaron spoke to the people.**

How did Moses and Aaron show that God had sent them? **By working miracles before the people.**

What did Aaron tell the people? **That God had seen their troubles and had come to save them.**

How did the people receive these words? **They believed them.**

How did they show their faith? **They bowed their heads and worshipped.**

3. The King, v. 1-4.

To whom did Moses and Aaron go next? **To King Pharaoh.**

In whose name did they speak to Pharaoh? **In the name of the Lord God of Israel.**

What did they ask of Pharaoh? **To let Israel go.**

For what purpose did they wish to go? **To hold a feast in the wilderness.**

What did Pharaoh say to them? **"I know not the Lord."**

What else did he say? **"I will not let Israel go."**

What did this show? **That his heart was hard.**

Words with Little People.

1. Trust in all God's promises. 2. See God's hand in all your life. 3. Reverence God in your words. 4. Obey all of God's commands.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who assisted Moses in delivering the Israelites from Egypt? **His brother Aaron.**

2. What was their first act in the work of leading out their people? **They assembled the Israelite elders.**

3. How did the Israelites receive their message? **They believed and worshipped God.**

4. What did Moses and Aaron ask of Pharaoh? **To let Israel go into the wilderness.**

5. For what purpose did they ask this privilege? **To hold a feast to God.**

6. How did Pharaoh answer them? **He refused to let them go.**

THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

II. OF CREATION. § 1. THE WORLD.

19. Can you repeat the first verse of the Bible? "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i. 1.

20. Does God preserve all things which he has made? He upholdeth all things by the word of his power.—Heb. i. 3.

§ 2. MAN.

21. Of what did God make man's body? "Of the dust of the ground."—Gen. 2. 7.

22. How did God make man's soul? God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."—Gen. 2. 7.

23. How do the soul and body differ? The body is material and mortal, the soul is spiritual and immortal.

24. Was man created good? He was; God created man in his own image.—Gen. 1. 27.

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Word of the Lord.

I. God's Word OBEYED.

The Lord said.... Go.... He went. v. 27.

"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do." John 2. 5.

II. God's Word DECLARED.

Aaron spake all the words. v. 30.

"What the Lord saith.... will I speak." 1 Kings 22. 14.

III. God's Word ATTESTED.

Did the signs.... sight of.... people. v. 30.

"No man can do.... miracles.... God." John 3. 2.

IV. God's Word RECEIVED.

1. **With Faith.** "*The people believed.*" v. 31.

"Believe on the Lord.... saved." Acts 16. 31.

2. **With Gratitude.** "*Bowed their heads.*" v. 31.

"Gladly received his word." Acts 2. 41.

V. God's Word REJECTED.

"*Who is the Lord.*" v. 2.

"What is.... Almighty.... serve him?" Job 21. 15.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Workers for God.

1. Workers for God should have affection for each other as brothers in a common cause. v. 27.

2. Workers for God should obey the words of God, and keep in the line of the divine plans. v. 28.

3. Workers for God should labor in harmony with each other, free from jealous strifes for precedence. v. 28.

4. Workers for God should seek for fellowship and friendliness with the people of God. v. 29.

5. Workers for God should speak not in their own name, but by the authority of God, who sends them forth. v. 30.

6. Workers for God carry with them in word and deed the stamp of a divine commission. v. 31.

7. Workers for God are fearless in the presence of earthly powers, for the fear of God dispels all fear of man. v. 1.

8. Workers for God must expect to have their purposes misunderstood and their motives misrepresented by the world. v. 4.

English Teacher's Notes.

WHAT boy, or what girl, does not know the delight of having a favorite companion, to whom thoughts and wishes are confided, and in concert with whom plans are laid and undertakings ventured upon? The Bible gives us several instances of such companionship. We have Daniel and his three friends; we have Peter and John; we have Paul and Barnabas. And in the lesson for to-day we have perhaps the most striking instance of all; for Moses and Aaron were not companions only, but brothers, of nearly the same age, who worked together for forty years.

And yet during the longest period of their lives they must have been almost strangers to one another. A few years they spent together at their mother's knee, and then there came a long separation. Moses, the Egyptian prince, the "son of Pharaoh's daughter," could have had little to do with Aaron, the Hebrew slave. We may suppose that at the time his great choice was made Moses sought out his family, and that during his exile in Midian he found means of holding some communication with them. Still, it was not until the one was eighty, and the other eighty-three, years of age that they became actual companions, associated together in one common work and interest.

Leaving his home and his father-in-law, sending back his wife and children after they had accompanied him a little way, Moses was proceeding on his

journey toward Egypt alone. Then God sent to him his brother, to be his companion and helper until the hour of death.

The passage appointed for the lesson brings before us three scenes of interest at the outset of the two brothers' career. We have their meeting together at Sinai, their meeting in Egypt with the elders of Israel, and their meeting with Pharaoh in his royal audience chamber.

1. *The meeting together at Sinai.* I suppose there is no meeting recorded in history, not even the gathering of Swiss citizens so beautifully pictured by Schiller in "William Tell," that can compare with this in interest. For Moses and Aaron met together to overthrow the power of Egypt, and deliver from slavery that nation which was to be God's witness in the ancient world, and the guardian of his word and his truth.

And of what was their converse? "Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him." They had met with no selfish or frivolous purpose, but as the Lord's servants, about to enter on the work he had entrusted to them. Up to this moment we know nothing of Aaron's life or character, but we now find him receiving by faith the message of Moses, and ready obediently to follow it. Moses met with no difficulty here. Aaron believed the word of God at the mouth of his brother, and accepted the call. The two found themselves *companions in faith and purpose.*

And how necessary is this to true and profitable companionship! That which a man truly and practically believes will mold his purpose and direct his life. And where there is divergence in this there can be no real harmony between soul and soul. It is a dangerous thing for a Christian to choose as his intimate companion one who has no practical belief in the things of God, who has never yet accepted the Saviour's call, nor set his heart to walk in the way of life. Such a companionship can, at the best, only result in uncertainty and unsteadiness of walk. And there is need even for Christian friends and companions to remember their calling. How often are the meetings and the converse between such purposeless and frivolous! If they are indeed companions in faith and purpose, should not their meeting show some trace of it, in mutual encouragement and edification? "I had a little friend," said a lady, "when I was eight years old, who was the same age as myself. We both loved God, and we agreed that when we met we would talk of him sometimes, instead of always talking of our dolls." Here is an example for our young people.

2. *The meeting in Egypt with the elders of Israel.* This was the outcome of the meeting at Sinai. On that occasion Aaron had heard that he was to be his brother's "prophet," to speak the words Moses told him, and do the signs Moses commanded him. And first they were to go to the elders of Israel and bring them a message from the "Lord God of their Fathers." This was no light errand. From a people so crushed, so desponding,

so unbelieving, as the Israelites, what reception could be naturally looked for? But among the "words of the Lord" which Moses repeated unto Aaron were those precious words, "*Certainly I will be with thee*"—the talisman through which they were to succeed. The entrusting of a talisman to any person pre-supposes that that person has some real work to accomplish, some actual difficulty to overcome, or some danger to escape. Thus, when Joseph was about to take into his hands the welfare of the Egyptian people and their deliverance from starvation, the king's ring was placed on his hand with the seal of authority that required obedience wherever it came. And Moses and Aaron had a really great work to do in rousing the minds of their nation and inspiring them with faith in the word of Jehovah. We see them next as *companions in labor.*

On the very threshold of their career the Lord gave them great encouragement. The elders of Israel were gathered together; the lips of Aaron, the eloquent speaker, repeated boldly the message of deliverance, and, strong in faith, he proceeded to show the signs which God had commanded. And the Israelites believed. The signs proved that the messengers came with authority; but it was the gracious message itself which won the hearts of the people so that "they bowed their heads and worshiped."

Joy and wonder must have been mingled in the hearts of Moses and Aaron as they beheld this scene. They had tasted the sweetness of doing God's work, and their zeal must have been greatly quickened. How many lives would be suddenly transformed and imbued with brightness, if only they were devoted to the service of God! It is one great use of companionship, that each shall encourage and stimulate the other rightly to use the time and talents God has given him. Moses needed the ready tongue of his brother, and Aaron needed the strength and determination of Moses. The late well-known author of "The Book and its Missions," the foundress of the noble order of "Bible Women" in England, owed to a young friend and companion the impulse which caused her to enter upon the great work.

3. *The meeting with Pharaoh in his audience chamber.* This was something more formidable than meeting the elders of Israel. It was bearding the lion in his den; breaking in upon the "strong man armed," whose "goods" were "at peace." Luke 11. 21. They went, not as suppliants, but as heralds with a message of authority. True, it was no harsh or threatening message. But it aimed an unmistakable blow at the sovereignty of Pharaoh over the enslaved Israelites, and was calculated in no small degree to rouse the anger of the proud monarch. "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me." The idea is scouted with astonished indignation; "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." The message is then repeated, couched in milder language. But by this time Pharaoh has recovered from his surprise, and has noted that the men before him are simple Israelites, alone and defenseless. And his wrath softens down into contempt as he bids them

"get you unto your burdens." The fortress stands apparently as strong as ever, but these *companions in arms* have hurled the first blow at it, and have done so with impunity.

The Lord's warriors receive their commissions singly, but he does not send them to fight the battle alone. He means them to be *companions in arms*.

"Many giants great and tall
Stalking through the land,
Straightway to the earth would fall
If met by Daniel's band."

The giant of strong drink, the giant of dishonest practices, the giant of levity in speech, the giant of extravagance in dress, and countless other things, need to be attacked in concert, for are not these keeping many in bondage who ought to be free to serve God? And does not the promise "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" apply to companions in labor and in warfare, as well as to companions in prayer?

But how came it to pass that these two companions and brothers, Moses and Aaron, were agreed in faith and purpose, in labor and in warfare? How came it that in almost every case up to the parting hour, they were true fellow-helpers in the work God had given them, so that while Aaron could lean upon Moses, Moses in his turn could lean upon Aaron? The Golden Text tells us, They were men whom God had chosen. It was not mere natural affection or old association that brought them together, but the will and the choice of God.

"Choose thou for me my friends," should be the prayer of every young Christian. And if God gives to any such their own brothers or sisters to be companions in faith and purpose, not only should they highly prize the gift, but they should seek, as far as is possible, to be companions also in work and in warfare.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw or show on the map, 1.) The journey of Moses from Midian. 2.) The journey of Aaron from Egypt. 3.) The place of meeting in the wilderness. 4.) The journey of the two brothers to Egypt.... Sketch briefly the life and character of Aaron.... Word-pictures of 1.) The meeting: two venerable brothers embracing on the Mount of God. 2.) The Assembly: the elders of Israel listening to the chosen leaders; bowing with tears of joy; accepting the message. 3.) The Summons: palace of Pharaoh; courtiers and princes around; Moses and Aaron before the throne. 4.) The Rejection: scornful answer of the king, etc.... Three classes of people, 1.) God's workers. 2.) God's people. 3.) God's enemies.... Examples of the lesson. 1.) Affection. 2.) Unity of effort. 3.) Fidelity, (in delivering God's message.) 4.) Faith, (ver. 31.) 5.) Thanksgiving. 6.) Worship.... Warnings of the lesson. 1.) Against unbelief. 2.) Against contempt of God.... Requisites for success in God's work, 1.) Leaders called of God. 2.) People having faith in God. 3.) Earnest work for God.... ILLUSTRATIONS. *Fraternal love.* "As the spokes of a wheel converge at the center, so the nearer we are to Christ the nearer to each other.".... *Unity of effort.* The strands of the great cables of the East River bridge, made of small wires, weak apart, yet mighty when woven together.... *God's message of freedom.* Compare the thanksgiving of Israel, with the news of Emancipation Proclamation among the slaves of the south.... *Unbelief from ignorance.* Pharaoh, like a

blind man, denying the existence of the sun because he cannot see it.

References. FOSTER'S PROSE. Vol. II. 6276, 10648, 10839. POETICAL: Vol. I. 1380, Vol. II. 3779. FREEMAN: Men kissing, 53; The elders, 717; Day's journey, 315.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

REVIEW. Talk about a call, and turn the thought from an earthly to a heavenly call. Who was called? By whom? To what work? Who promised to be with him? Can we do any thing without God?

LESSON THOUGHT. Faith is Wisdom.



1. Tell about the meeting of Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: how and where they met, and what Moses showed to Aaron. They talked over God's plan for the Israelites, and were both ready to do God's work in *his* way. Print on the board, "Moses and Aaron were wise," and see that the children understand the meaning of wise.

2. Tell about the meeting with the people, and what was done then. Many of the Israelites did not know Moses, as he had been gone from Egypt forty years. Did they believe his word? Tell that they believed the signs from God, and how they showed their faith by worshipping and praising God. Talk about captivity and freedom, comparing the captivity of sin to the bondage of the Israelites, and the joy of those who are made free by faith in Jesus. Print, "The people were wise."

3. Describe the visit to Pharaoh, and his scornful unbelief. He asked, "Who is the Lord?" and show that we ask this question in our hearts when we are unbelieving and disobedient. Draw from children some reasons why they believe there is a God, and help them to some they do not think of, drawing attention to their own wonderful bodies and senses. Was the king wise? Print, "Pharaoh was foolish."



CLOSING THOUGHT. Question as to the difference between the Israelites and Pharaoh, showing that it was a difference of faith, or belief in God, and thus teaching the lesson thought, "Faith is Wisdom." Show that faith leads to obedience and love, and teach the verse, "They that be wise shall shine as the stars." Sing "Precious Jewels."

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Pharaoh's heart was really the prison door that held the Israelites captive. If his heart can be opened then Israel will go free. Moses and Aaron, as God's chosen leaders, now knock gently at this door; if it will not open, God will make bare his mighty arm, and display his power. The application of the lesson is the knocking at the prison door of a sinner's heart.

B. C. 1491.] LESSON V. MOSES AND THE MAGICIANS; or, Signs and Wonders. [July 31.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The period of preparation is ended, and that of struggle now begins; not between the armies of Israel and of Egypt, for the enslaved multitudes stand in silent awe while their God fights for them. Moses comes into the presence of Pharaoh, no more as a suppliant, but as one invested with divine authority. He is bidden to attest his mission from the Most High by a token. At his command Aaron casts his staff on the floor of the palace, and instantly it is transformed into a living monster, either a snake or a crocodile. The unbelieving king summons his magicians, and they show their art by imitating the miracle. Their rods are cast down, and become serpents also, but one by one they are seized and swallowed by Aaron's, which remains at last alone upon the field. Still the king refuses to accept the message from Jehovah, and then begins that awful series of ten judgments upon the people and the gods of Egypt. The sacred river runs red with blood; foul creatures swarm in earth and air, bringing defilement and breeding disease; lightnings cleave asunder the heavens, and hail sweeps over the fields; crops are devoured by locusts, and cattle perish by the pestilence, darkness covers the land, and, last of all, death enters every dwelling, until even Pharaoh's proud heart is crushed, and he bids Israel go forth free. The aim of all these signs and wonders is not merely to compel Egypt to let the Lord's people depart, nor to punish her for oppressing them, but to reveal Jehovah as the supreme ruler, against whom the gods of Egypt are helpless to protect their worshippers.

Exod. 7. 8-17.

[Memory Verses, 15-17.]

8 And the LORD spake unto Mo'ses and unto Aa'ron, saying,

9 When Pha'raoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aa'ron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pha'raoh, and it shall become a serpent.

John 6. 30: What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

10 And Mo'ses and Aa'ron went in unto Pha'raoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aa'ron cast down his rod before Pha'raoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

Exod. 4. 2, 3: And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent: and Moses fled from before it.

11 Then Pha'raoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

2 Tim. 3. 8: Jaunes and Jambres withstood Moses. Gen. 41. 8: And [Pharaoh] sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream. Dan. 2. 2: Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams.

12 For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aa'ron's rod swallowed up their rods.

13 And he hardened Pha'raoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them, as the LORD had said.

Job 9. 4: Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered? Dan. 5. 20: But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.

14 And the LORD said unto Mo'ses, Pha'raoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.

15 Get thee unto Pha'raoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water, and thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come: and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.

Explanatory and Practical.

Verses 8, 9. The Lord spake. In what manner cannot now be known; perhaps by direct impression upon their minds, so strong as to be supernatural. **Unto Moses and unto Aaron.** Probably to Moses directly, and through him to Aaron. **When Pharaoh shall speak.** It was taken for granted that Pharaoh would demand some proof that the two brothers bore a message from God, and were not deceivers. (1) *Those who speak as God's heralds must expect to have their authority called in question.* (2) *Every disciple needs to know the evidences on which his faith rests.* **Show a miracle.** A miracle is an event wrought by divine power, contrary to the usual order of nature, for the purpose of attesting a messenger as coming from God. **For you.** For yourselves, in proof of your authority. **Take thy rod.** The shepherd's staff which Moses had carried in the wilderness, and which had been used in working miracles, he had now transferred to Aaron. **A serpent.** The word here is not the same in the Hebrew with that in Exod. 4. 3. There it means "a serpent;" here it is a word translated "dragon" in Psa. 74. 13. Some have thought it refers to the *basilisk*, or *asp*, others to the *crocodile*, which was common in the Nile, and a symbol of Egypt.

10. 11. Went in unto Pharaoh. To the royal palace. **It became a serpent.** The shepherd's staff suddenly was transformed into a dragon of the Nile, probably the fierce crocodile: a symbol that the shepherd-people of Israel may become a formidable foe, if God's message be disobeyed. **The wise men . . . sorcerers . . . magicians.** Three names applied to one class of learned men well known in Egyptian history. The first word relates to their supposed knowledge, the second to the incantations by which they were supposed to obtain help from spirits, the third is a general term meaning *sacred scribes*. Pharaoh's purpose in sending for these wonder-workers was to show that either Moses and Aaron were only magicians like those of Egypt, or, if their works were supernatural, that their God was no more powerful than the gods of Egypt. **In like manner with their enchantments.** They imitated the miracle by their magical arts, but whether by the assistance of spirits or by mere sleight of hand, the record does not declare.

12. They cast down . . . became serpents. Outwardly the same effect was produced. The magicians of the Oriental world have in all ages exhibited feats which *seem* miraculous, just as in our time and land some spiritualistic mediums have also done; but in our opinion they have all alike been the result of skill, and not of supernatural aid. **Aaron's rod swallowed.** Showing that his God was mightier than theirs, and prophetic of the religion that was to swallow up all the boasted wisdom of Egypt.

13, 14. He hardened Pharaoh's heart. An incorrect translation. It should be, "And Pharaoh's heart was hardened," as in verse 22, where the words in Hebrew are the same. (3) *Unbelievers can always find an excuse for their unbelief, and sinners for their sin.* (4) *Men pervert the very evidences of divine truth into arguments against it.* Ten times in this book it is said, "God hardened Pharaoh's heart," and precisely the same number of times that "Pharaoh hardened his heart," or similar expressions. The latter indicates the human side of the narrative, the voluntary, responsible act of man; the former represents the divine side, God's judgment upon man for his resistance to the divine will, in the increasing insensibility of his nature. Pharaoh refused to believe, and therefore, by the operation of the divine law, God hardened his heart. **As the Lord had said.** They might have been discouraged by his obduracy, if they had not been already forewarned of it. Vers. 3, 4. **Is hardened.** Literally, "is heavy," a word employed five times to represent Pharaoh's condition.

15. Unto the water. The king's visit to the river was probably for worship, since the river was regarded as a god by the Egyptians. **Stand by the river's brink.** As he might not find admission to the palace, he was to await the king's coming by the river. **The rod.** The instrument of the former miracle, which Pharaoh had falsely ascribed to magical arts, was again to be employed, and this time in a work which must be recognized as supernatural.

16. The Lord God of the Hebrews. "Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews." Jehovah is the personal name of Deity, meaning, "He who lives," a living God, as distinct from the dead, stony gods of Egypt. **My people.** The Israelites were God's people, not because they were better than other nations, nor because God arbitrarily chose them as the objects of his grace; but because it was necessary that some one nation should be made the depository of divine truth, and this nation was chosen both on account of the

16 And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto, thou wouldest not hear.

17 Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I am the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood.

Rev. 16. 4-6: And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters: and they became blood....Thou art righteous, O Lord....for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink.

faith of its ancestors, and its characteristics of endurance and strength, fitting it to keep its mighty trust until the world should be ready to receive it. **Serve me.** Worshiping in their own way outside the jurisdiction of Egypt.

17. Thus saith the LORD. Moses speaks, by the mouth of Aaron, as a true messenger of God, not in his own name, but in his Master's. (5) *So every Christian preacher and worker should deliver his message under the authority of God's word. Thou shalt know.* Pharaoh had said, "I know not the Lord;" now he is to know, by experience of his power, who is the Lord, and what is his power. **I will smite.** So that the event may show itself connected with the act of the messenger, and not as an accident. **The waters.** The Nile-water is fresh, and though clayey, when allowed to settle becomes better for drinking than that of other rivers. Travelers have said that it is the finest in the world. **Turned to blood.** The river which brought life to the whole land was to become polluted and deadly: worshiped as a god, it was to be shown powerless under the mighty hand of Jehovah. (6) *So God turns the wisdom of man to folly, and the majesty of earth into helplessness.* During the inundation (when perhaps this miracle took place) the Nile is of a reddish hue, but is wholesome. It now turns blood-red and putrid, causing the fish to decay, and becoming nauseous to the taste.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Moses and the magicians. Exod. 7. 8-17.
Tw. Pharaoh's heart hardened. Exod. 5. 5-23.
W. The first plague. Exod. 7. 19-25.
Th. The second plague. Exod. 8. 1-15.
F. The third and fourth plagues. Exod. 8. 16-32.
S. The fifth and sixth plagues. Exod. 9. 1-12.
S. The seventh plague. Exod. 9. 22-35.

GOLDEN TEXT.

They showed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. Psa. 105. 27.

LESSON HYMN. H. M.

Hymnal, No. 142.

Through all his mighty works
Amazing wisdom shines;
Confound the powers of hell,
And all their dark designs;
Strong is his arm, and shall fulfill
His great decrees and sovereign will.

And will this sovereign King
Of glory condescend,

And will he write his name,

My Father and my Friend?

I love his name, I love his word:

Join all my powers to praise the Lord.

TIME.—B. C. 1491.

PLACE.—Egypt, probably near Zoan or Tanis.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. The increased severity of the bondage. Exod. 5. 5-23. 2. Renewed commands to Moses. Exod. 6. 1-13.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—The design of miracles.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Sign of the Rod, v. 8-13.

What was the first effect of Moses' mission to Pharaoh? [See Connecting Links.]

What feeling was inspired among the Israelites? Exod. 5. 21: 6. 9.

What command did God give to Moses? 6. 11.

What demand from Pharaoh was expected?

What similar demand was made upon Christ? John 2. 18: 6. 30.

What is a miracle?

Why do not miracles occur now as they occurred formerly?

What miracle was wrought before Pharaoh?

Did Pharaoh accept it with faith in God?

How did he regard it? What did he do?

What were the names of two of these magicians? 2 Tim. 3. 8.

How did the magicians imitate Aaron's miracle?

What became of their rods?

What did this show?

How was Pharaoh affected by this result?

In what respect was his heart hardened by the Lord?

How had this result been foretold? Exod. 7. 3.

2. The Sign of the Blood, v. 14-17.

What command was now given to Moses?

Where was he to meet Pharaoh?

For what purpose did the king visit the river? [Ans. Probably to worship the god of the Nile.]

For what purpose was Moses to take the rod?

What warning was he to give to Pharaoh?

Why would this miracle be a great affliction to the Egyptians?

Why would it be a blow at their system of religion?

What was the effect of the miracle? v. 21.

How was Pharaoh influenced by it? v. 23.

Practical Teachings.

What does this lesson teach—1. Concerning miracles? 2. Concerning God's power? 3. Concerning God's enemies?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Sign of the Rod, v. 8-13.

What did God say that Pharaoh would ask?

What is a miracle?

For what purpose are miracles given?

What do miracles show? John 3. 2.

Why do not miracles occur now?

What miracle did God promise to show to Pharaoh?

With what was the miracle wrought?

What had taken place with this rod before? Exod. 4. 2-4.

What did Pharaoh do?

What did his conduct show?

What did the magicians do?

What were the names of some of them? 2 Tim. 3. 8.

What happened to their rods?

What did this show as to the power of God?

What effect did this have on Pharaoh's heart?

What should have been its effect?

2. The Sign of the Blood, v. 14-17.

What did God say to Moses?

What is it to have hardened hearts?

What did God command to Moses?

Where was he to meet Pharaoh?

What river was this?

For what purpose would Pharaoh go to the river?

In whose name was Moses commanded to speak to Pharaoh?

Why did he not speak in his own name?

What was he to say to Pharaoh?

What miracle was Moses commanded to announce?

Why was this a terrible calamity?

Did it take place? v. 20. 21.

What was its effect on Pharaoh? v. 23.

What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we see—1. The confidence of those who obey God? 2. The daring of those who are against God? 3. The trouble which comes upon those who resist God?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

1. The Sign of the Rod, v. 8-13.

What did Pharaoh ask Moses and Aaron to do? To show him a miracle.

What is a miracle? A work which none but God can do.

What did Aaron do? He threw down his rod before the king.

What then happened? The rod was turned into a snake.

How did Pharaoh receive this miracle? He did not believe.

What did he do? He sent for his wise men.



What did the wise men do? **They threw down their rods also.**

What then took place? **Their rods were turned into snakes.**

What became of them? **Aaron's rod swallowed them all.**

What did this show? **That the God of Israel was greater than their gods.**

Did Pharaoh then believe? **He did not, for his heart was hardened.**

2. The Sign of the Blood, v. 14-17.

What did God next command Moses and Aaron to do? **To go to meet Pharaoh once more.**

Where were they to meet him? **At the bank of the river.**

What were they to ask him? **To let Israel go.**

What were they to say if he refused? **They were to give him another sign.**

What sign were they to give him? **The river should be turned into blood.**

When did the river become blood? **When Moses struck it with his rod.**

Did this make Pharaoh obey? **No; his heart became harder still.**

What is said in the **GOLDEN TEXT**?

What is meant by the land of Ham? **The land of Egypt.**

Words with Little People.

1. See how wonderful is God's power.
2. Submit to God's will, and obey his words.
3. Beware of hardness of heart in opposing God.
4. Remember that the weakest are mighty if God be on their side.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. How did Moses and Aaron show to Pharaoh that they came from God? **By a miracle.**
2. What was the first miracle? **Aaron's rod became a serpent.**
3. Who imitated this miracle? **The magicians of Egypt.**
4. What showed a power greater than their own? **Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.**
5. What was the effect of this miracle upon Pharaoh? **His heart was hardened.**
6. What further miracle was threatened if he would not let the people go? **That the river should become blood.**

THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

[Review Questions 1-24.]

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Two Opposing Forces.

I. THE POWER OF GOD.

1. **Foreknowledge.** "*Pharaoh shall speak.*" v. 8.

"Known unto God....all his works." Acts 15. 18.

2. **Omnipotence.** "*Became a serpent.*" v. 10.

"Who is like...thee....doing wonders." Exod. 15. 11.

3. **Omniscience.** "*Pharaoh's heart....hardened.*" v. 14.

"Thou hast searched me... known me." Psa. 139. 1.

4. **Judgment.** "*Turned to blood.*" v. 17.

"He turned their waters into blood." Psa. 105. 29.

II. THE POWERS OF THE WORLD.

1. **Skeptical.** "*Show a miracle.*" v. 9.

"Evil....generation seeketh after a sign." Matt. 12. 39.

2. **Deceiving.** "*Their enchantments.*" v. 11.

"These resist the truth." 2 Tim. 3. 8.

3. **Obdurate.** "*He hearkened not.*" v. 13.

"Mighty works....done....repented not." Matt. 11. 30.

4. **Superstitious.** "*Goeth....unto the water.*" v. 15.

"Worshipped....the creature more than....Creator." Rom. 1. 25.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Thoughts on Miracles.

1. Miracles are expected by men as proofs of a divine message. v. 9.

2. Miracles were bestowed upon men in the childhood of the race, and during the earlier dispensations, while truth was imperfectly understood. v. 9, 10.

3. Miracles may be imitated by men, but can be wrought only by God. v. 11, 12.

4. Miracles fail to convince those who are not willing to believe. v. 13.

5. Miracles are generally progressive, from less to greater, and from works of wonder to those of wrath. v. 16, 17.

6. Miracles are now no longer needed, since the Bible and the Gospel, the crowning miracles, are before all men.

English Teacher's Notes.

IN the chapter from which the preceding lesson is taken we get (though we did not stop to notice it) our first introduction to the miracles of the Bible. The signs which Moses and Aaron were commanded to show to the Israelites are the very first wonders recorded as having been performed through human instrumentality. And the fact that miraculous signs were given to the elders of Israel proves how far the chosen people had gone astray. The voice of God had been sufficient for their forefathers, but they had sunk almost to the level of the Egyptians among whom they lived, and needed the rousing sign and the significant wonder.

In the mythology of heathen nations the element of wonder plays an important part. The Greek, the Hindu, the Mohammedan, have all had marvelous stories to tell of the deities and heroes they worshiped, and, in the case of the two latter, stories which are absurd in the extreme. But these inventions, whether poetical or grotesque, have no moral significance. And the same may be said of many Romish legends, and of wonders palmed off upon the credulous in the present day. The miracles of the Bible are of a totally different character. They are not merely wonders; they are also signs.

Pharaoh had received the divine message with the haughty reply: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?" He had his gods whom he worshiped; he had his magicians; he himself was named after the sun, and received almost divine honors; he would not bow before the God of a subject people like the Israelites. By gradual steps he and his people were to be shown their own impotence, the impotence of their wonder-workers, the impotence of the things they worshiped as deities, and to be brought to acknowledge the supreme power of Jehovah. "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them."

Therefore when Pharaoh challenged the messengers of Jehovah to "show a miracle," they were instructed to begin with a wonder of which the form was familiar to the Egyptians, and which was at once imitated by the magicians whom the king called in. How the imitation was performed we have no means of deciding. Serpent-charming is an art practiced extensively in the East. We read

of a class of men called *Psyli*, who handled the most poisonous of these creatures, and who possessed some means of rendering them at will stiff and motionless as logs of wood, and afterward restoring them to their natural condition. Whether it was in this way, or by mere sleight of hand, that the magicians imitated the miracle of Moses and Aaron, they evidently appeared to the bystanders to have performed the same thing. At first sight, therefore, it seemed that they were able to compete with the ambassadors of Jehovah. But the contrary was quickly made manifest. In a moment their serpents, their rods—, all had disappeared. "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." They were entirely defeated.

The second miracle—the turning of the River Nile into blood—was even more significant than the first. It showed not only the power of Jehovah, but prefigured his judgments. The annoyance, the horror, the harm, the loss, the destruction, the death, wrought by the succeeding signs, which, together with this one, form the "plagues of Egypt," were all present, though in a restricted and limited form in this first plague. It turned the pride of the Egyptians, that which they looked upon as the source of their wealth and prosperity, as well as the comfort of their daily life, and which they worshiped with divine honors, into an object of loathing. If their magicians, or their gods, had any power, might they not be expected to reverse the infliction, or render the curse upon the river abortive? Yet all they could compass was the turning of more water into blood! It was the same with the third plague; they imitated, but they could not undo, the evil. And at this point even their imitations ceased, and we hear no more of them. And as miracle followed miracle, the Egyptians learned indeed, to their pain, and loss, and sorrow, that neither they nor their magicians, nor their idols, nor their king, had any power to withstand the God of Israel, to whom all things were subject.

Comparing these with the miracles of the New Testament we find that under the Gospel dispensation the "signs" assume a different character. There was but one act of judgment performed by our Lord, that on the fruitless fig-tree. And in the early Church we read but of two, that upon the false professors, Ananias and Sapphira, and that upon Elymas the sorcerer. For it is not the power of God in temporal judgments, but the power of God over the heart and spirit of man, which is displayed in the Gospel. And so our Lord went about "doing good and healing all that were oppressed with the devil," and the miraculous powers intrusted to his disciples were used in almost every case for the same purpose.

These powers appear to have been given but for a time, given only when actually needed for the advancement of Christ's kingdom. The missionaries who now go out among the heathen to bring the tidings of the Gospel do not possess them. Nor is there need of any supernatural gifts to insure them a hearing among those to whom they are sent. Their superior civilization does this, and for their

purely spiritual warfare they need purely spiritual weapons.

But though we do not in the present day look for miracles, yet all true servants of God must be showing forth his power in real "signs and wonders," such as may be plainly read and understood of all men. This is a matter which concerns the very youngest Christian.

The world expects such signs and wonders. Pharaoh's challenge, "Show a miracle for you," has its counterpart in the present day. The Egyptian king rightly concluded that if the God of Israel had any power, the messengers who demanded submission to his authority would be able to bring forward some proof of it. And the world now expects that those who profess to be the servants of God should show that his service has some clear and distinct meaning, and that his call and his command do influence and transform the lives of those who hear and obey them. Contempt and ridicule would have fallen upon the message of Moses and Aaron, had they been unable to give the proof that was asked for. And contempt does often come upon the Christian profession, because it lacks the "signs and wonders" that of truth belong to it. But, when shown,

The world can recognize these signs and wonders. "Something is certainly happening; why, men are paying their debts!" was the exclamation of an astonished creditor, who had just received payment for an old score, long forgotten, the debtor having heard and accepted the Gospel call at one of the crowded meetings then taking place. "Is not your town much improved? The streets are so much quieter at night," was the question asked on another occasion of a policeman. "Ah, yes! sir," was the reply, "the Spirit of God has been among us, [there had been a "revival" in the place,] and this is the consequence." "She is indeed changed," said a young woman of her sister, a girl of fourteen, who had been convinced of sin at a children's meeting, and had accepted the Saviour: "She used to be an *impudent hussy*, but she is quite different now!" That the fraudulent should become honest, that the bold and clamorous should grow modest and quiet, that the proud, selfish, and passionate should turn meek and gentle—these are the "wonders" which accompany the proclamation of the Gospel message, and they are sure "signs" of the working of the Holy Spirit of God.

Christ's people are commanded to show forth these signs and wonders. Moses and Aaron were not to let Pharaoh's challenge pass unaccepted. They were not to shrink from competing with the magicians of Egypt. All eyes were upon them, and the honor of their God was concerned. And the command was plain: "Say unto Aaron, 'Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent.'" The command to those who profess to love Christ is as plain: "Putting away lying; speak every man truth with his neighbor;" "Let him that stole steal no more;" "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;" "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-

speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." Eph. 5. 25, 28-30. And the reason is given: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5. 16. See also 1 Pet. 2. 12. It is even more holy and blessed than that set before Moses and Aaron: "That the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord." But we must bear in mind that

Christ's people are entirely dependent on him for the power to show forth these signs and wonders. When the rod of Moses was thrown on the ground, neither he nor Aaron had power to turn it into a living serpent. Neither had they power over the great river, with all the water in the land derived from it, which was far beyond their sight. They depended absolutely upon God to perform what he had promised through them. And, in fact, had the power been resident in them, the putting forth of it would have made known their own greatness, but not the greatness of Jehovah. It is just so with the Christian. He has in himself no power to show forth the "signs and wonders" of the new creation in Christ. The power is there, but it is not in him, but in Christ. And if it is to come forth, it must be through entire dependence on Christ. His people are commanded to bring forth fruit; but they can only do so by abiding in him who is the true Vine, whence the living sap flows forth into the branches. When little Mary Lundie Duncan turned her "other" cheek to the brother who, in his passion, had just struck her, with the gentle remark, "There, Corie," was it not the power of the Lord Jesus, working in her by the Holy Spirit, which produced that "sign" and (may we not call it so) "wonder?" Thank God, the youngest and humblest follower of Christ may show forth these "signs and wonders" to his praise and glory. To any and all of our Sunday scholars who obey the divine call, and grasp the "talisman" of the Lord's presence, the power shall be given to do what, in their own strength, would be impossible, and so to show forth the praise of him they serve, that others too shall learn to know him and glorify his name.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Explain concerning miracles. 1.) The definition of a miracle. 2.) The purpose of a miracle. 3.) The difference between a miracle and a "wonder," or an inexplicable event.... The miracles of Moses, and the acts of the magicians.... The miracles of the Old Testament and of the New.... Why no more miracles?... The hardening of Pharaoh's heart.... In teaching, avoid mere speculations and theories, and make the lesson practical.... Two pictures: 1.) The rod transformed. 2.) The river transformed.... Show in this lesson 1.) Workers with God. 2.) Workers against God. 3.) Enemies of God.... ILLUSTRATIONS. For a good example of the principle in miracles, see Lesson Commentary, page 223. The moving of a watch's hands by its owner an illustration of God's power in the world.... The flower extracts perfume and the noxious weed poison from the same soil, sun, and air; so hearts draw faith and unbelief from the same events.... "Miracles are like candles lit up until the sun rises, and then blown out. In our time miracles would be like candles in the street at midday."

References. FOSTER'S PROSE: Vol. I. 451, 3974, 4786. Vol. II. 7615, 10559, 10561. POETICAL: Vol. I. 341. Vol. II. 3358, 3802. FREEMAN: Magicians, 76, 195.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

Recall the last lesson by printing on the board the words "Faith" and "Wise," and let questions grow naturally out of them.

LESSON THOUGHT. Unbelief Shuts the Heart. To be taught: 1.) That God tries to make us see. 2.) That we may shut our eyes to the light. 3.) That God will have his way.



1. Show a flower, or some kind of fruit, and talk about the wonder of its all coming from a tiny seed. Lead thus to the thought of God's power, and the great things he can do. Tell of the heavier burdens that had been put upon the Israelites since Moses had asked the king to let them go. God told Moses what to do, for he wanted Pharaoh to see what

was right, and to do it. Speak of some ways in which God sends word to us how we ought to act.

2. Tell what Pharaoh did, to prove that God's power was not great. No doubt he was glad when he saw that his wise men could do the wonderful things, too! But when Aaron's rod swallowed up the others, and he could not help seeing the truth, still he shut his eyes. How could he do this? He did not want to believe in God. This room is full of light, but you can all be in the dark if you want to be. How? Must all the doors and windows be closed to make it dark? Explain. Pharaoh had the same power that we have to say "I will" and "I won't." What did he say to God? What do we say?

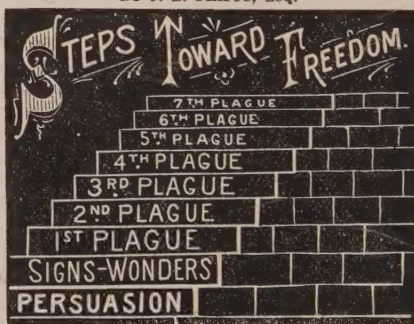
3. Tell what God said would be done if Pharaoh would not obey, and illustrate, by something great and powerful, God's loving and beautiful will, and show how little and weak a human will is against it. Show how bad it would be for us to have our own way, and how good God is to send trouble and pain to lead us to him.



CLOSING EXERCISE. Print Lesson Thought, and show a piece of stone, telling how that has been made, little by little, becoming harder and harder all the time. Show that the heart will grow harder by every act of unbelief, until it becomes "a stony heart," which only hard blows can break.

Blackboard.

BY J. E. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Draw an outline of the steps before the school assemblies. These are to be the successive steps taken to force or persuade Pharaoh to let Israel go. The first step is Lesson 4. The second step is Lesson 5. After these come all the plagues, the name of which can be written on each step during the review. This brings us to Lesson 6—the passover.

LESSONS FOR AUGUST, 1881.

- AUG. 7. The Passover; or, Christ our Sacrifice. Exod. 12. 1-14. [14. 19-27.]
- AUG. 14. The Red Sea; or, Going Forward. Exod. 21. The Manna; or, Bread from Heaven. Exod. 16. 1-8. [God. Exod. 20. 1-11.]
- AUG. 28. The Commandments; or, Love toward

Outline Studies on the Lessons.

BY REV. JOHN WILLIAMSON, D.D.

LESSON I.—Exod. 1. 1-14.

Lesson Truth in Outline.

1. The particularity with which persons are mentioned by name, and the consistency with which their histories are traced in Bible narratives, are no ordinary proof of genuineness, vers. 1-4.

2. No one can accurately judge from the meagerness or brilliancy of a beginning what the end will be, ver. 5.

3. It is a sad reflection that we, too, must leave our generation forever, ere its most promising enterprises mature and bear fruit, ver. 6.

4. The righteous are assured of God's idea of prosperity, in the plan of his providence, though the personal discipline by which it is afforded may be severe, ver. 7.

5. When the righteous pray, the real petition is their need, and not their *notion*!

6. Prosperity and adversity are usually associated in sudden and radical alternations in God's plan of perfecting his people, ver. 8.

7. The most natural and commendable, as well as the most ignoble and perilous, human characteristic, is the instinct of self-preservation, ver. 9.

8. Statesmanship makes a great mistake, and in reality scientifically fosters what it would abate, when it seeks by cruelty to diminish the fecundity of an objectionable part of the population, and break its spirit for rebellion, vers. 9-12.

9. Governments founded in wisdom and in righteousness may hope to last forever, if they fully enlighten their subjects in intelligence and in religion, ver. 12.

10. God's school of human probation for the training of his people is one of terrible severity, but men and women *may* and *should* decline to be the providential agents of that severe discipline, ver. 14.

LESSON II.—Exod. 2. 5-15.

Lesson Truth in Outline.

1. Our most far-reaching and important opportunities come to us in the discharge of daily duty or pleasure, ver. 5.

2. As the little ark, with its inestimably precious contents, was reposefully moving down its guardian waters, the royal bather, using her momentary opportunity, seized it: so should we grasp and use our many but fleeting chances as they glide by us toward the shoreless sea of destiny, ver. 5.

3. No human characteristic is nobler or more hopeful than an adult susceptibility to the tender appeals of helpless infancy, ver. 6.

4. Though we may be most intimately related to the official executive authority of a State, none of its laws are entitled to our obedience that impose upon us the crime of inhumanity, ver. 6.

5. We should hold ourselves in momentary readiness to take advantage of our affluent providential opportunities, ver. 7.

6. God Almighty, its Author and Lord, sits behind the familiar and frictionless plan we call Nature, to so modify its processes as to bring to pass his wise and holy will on earth, vers. 8, 9.

7. The disloyal, as well as the loyal, subjects of God's government are, through the mysteries of his sovereign overruling, made to bear their part in accomplishing his determined purposes, ver. 10.

8. The long-continued enjoyment by us of providential good fortune should not alienate our patriotic and personal sympathy for abused countrymen, ver. 11.

9. We have here a striking illustration of the sad and sinful consequences apt to follow the exercise of virtuous, but passionate, resentment, ver. 12.

10. Here, in sacred narration, doubtless for some benevolent reason, is recorded an instance of the inutility and mischief of abruptly interfering, unasked, to adjust a dispute between brethren, ver. 13.

11. God, though he covenants to deliver his people from the wrath of their enemies, when that is best, never agrees to spare them from the consequences of their rashness, ver. 14.

12. Moses paid for this homicide the full penalty of forty years' imprisonment in Midian, and whatsoever any man soweth that shall he also reap, ver. 15.

LESSON III.—Exod. 3. 1-14.

Lesson Truth in Outline.

1. Many of the grandly influential characters of human history have been trained for immortal life-work, in part, by the preceptorship of menial and obscure employments, ver. 1.

2. Souls longing for interviews with God of unusual intimacy and sweetness may expect to find them, not in elegant and reposeful leisure, but amid the responsibilities and weariness of legitimate and faithfully discharged daily labor, ver. 1.

3. The "angel of the Lord," the eternal Son, the Prince of Peace, the Everlasting Father, here, in a surprise of brilliancy and blessing, reveals God to man, ver. 2.

4. From the beginning of human history till now how spontaneous the rationalism that would examine surprises for causes, and abate personal astonishment by explanations, ver. 3.

5. A really devout and sincere inquirer after the truth may confidently expect to hear the familiarly recognizing voice of God through the manifestation of Him who said, "I am the Truth," ver. 4.

6. The Holy Bible, "the Word," being the "burning bush" that manifests God to modern men, we should invite its saving illumination by reverent, diligent study and submissive discipleship, ver. 5.

7. God may speak directly to man; man may know that it is God who speaks, may fully comprehend the message, and, though in confusion, may suitably reply, ver. 6.

8. Israel in Egypt, in sin and in moral childhood, needed corrective discipline and spiritual nurture from God, but he did not purpose to afford both by the appointment of cruel and mercenary taskmasters, vers. 7-9.

9. The word of the eternal God is pledged forever to immediately deliver his people out of every real danger; and support them in every needed sorrow, ver. 8.

10. Having faithfully submitted to the delay of providential pupillage, the child of God may reposefully trust him for wise assignment to life-work, ver. 10.

11. In the presence of divinely appointed personal duty, the noblest human soul shrinks behind the eternal "Certainly I will be with thee," ver. 12.

12. The heaven-appointed apology, or justification, for any work we would undertake to do, and to which we are providentially assigned, is the authority of God's word commanding it, and the utility of such service is shown by the quality of its results, vers. 12-14.

LESSON IV.—Exod. 4. 27-5. 4.

Lesson Truth in Outline.

1. God spake to man face to face, as to Aaron once, but now as directly through his word, ver. 27; Heb. 1. 1, 2; John 1. 1, 14.

2. How wise and beautiful the precedent, but how rare the sight, of brothers, united after a long separation, talking in their first precious interview of the wonderful words and works of God, ver. 28.

3. The once timid and irresolute Moses, strengthened by contact with God, actually called the most eminent souls of all Israel together that he might thus get a fitting chance to personally testify for God, vers. 29, 30.

4. Then, as now, there was resistless power in pure and positive testimony to inspire in others faith and devout worship, ver. 31.

5. The spiritual nerve acquired through confession and testimony is daring enough in the commendable irrationality of its enthusiasm, against any odds, to be evangelistic, chap. 4. 1.

6. Man's full knowledge of God is not a natural intuition of his soul, but a revelation of Divine Grace, ver. 2.

7. Men enlightened by intimate communion with God, and bold to affirm and commend the privilege to others, are dangerous opponents of the Powers of Darkness, and are thoroughly detested by them, vers. 3, 4.

LESSON V.—Exod. 7. 8-17.

Lesson Truth in Outline.

1. The human mind, as a matter of interesting philosophy, is able, in a state we call divine inspiration, to identify and commune with the supernatural, ver. 8.

2. When modern Pharisees demand from Christian believers miracles as proof of divine authority for their faith, let them be sure to use the grandest of all the ages—the fact of a human soul changed by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ from sin to holiness, ver. 9.

3. The many miracles of Old and New Testament times will not be repeated to persuade modern doubt, since the divineness of Christ's religion is best shown by its fruits, ver. 10.

4. The value of religion, like the value of bread, is proved, not by turning rods into snakes, and rivers into blood, but by experience.

5. The people of God should, in any presence, and at any personal cost, be faithful to his commands, ver. 10.

6. The magicians of modern skepticism assume unsuccessfully to produce in human character, by culture, what Christian faith avers to be impossible without God, ver. 11.

7. The doctrine of possible change of human nature from sin to purity by the power of the supernatural through faith in Jesus Christ, is bound to swallow up every opposing belief, ver. 12.

8. God is the Author of the obvious relation existing in the human soul between continued sinning and the permanent ruin of conscience, ver. 13.

9. So far as God's method of administration is disclosed to us in Bible narratives, his mind is to punish unrepentant sinners with greater and still greater severity the longer their guilt continues, ver. 15.

10. It is in the last degree perilous to prevent or embarrass God's people when they would seek the isolation of a higher spiritual consecration, ver. 17.

Book Notices.

Circumstantial Evidences of Christianity. By Daniel Carey. Cincinnati: Walden & Stowe. New York: Phillips & Hunt. An addition to the apologetic literature of the day, in which many of the objections of modern infidelity are considered. We regard it a serious defect of the book that in the numerous quotations from various authors no reference is given to volume or page. The author's explanation of this omission we have tried to understand, but cannot.

Duties and Duties. A Tale. By Agnes Giberne. New York: Carter & Brothers. A somewhat singular phase of religious life is here presented. It may be that some professing Christians will find their portraits drawn in this story.

Mary Singleton; or, The Question Answered. By James D. Cameron. Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Methodist Publishing House. People who like dancing and other worldly amusements will not like this book. Nevertheless it may do them good to read it.

Leaders of Men. A Book of Biographies specially written for Youth. By H. A. Page. New York: Carter & Brothers. From a number of illustrious examples the means are made known by which true success may be achieved. This book ought to go into our Sunday-school libraries.

At the Threshold. Familiar Talks with Young Christians concerning Doctrines and Duties. By Rev. Ross C. Houghton, D.D. Cincinnati: Walden & Stowe. New York: Phillips & Hunt. It would be a good thing if every probationer in our Church could have a copy of this book to read and carefully examine.

Boys and Girls Playing, and Other Addresses to Children. By the Right Rev. John Charles Ryle, D.D., Lord Bishop of Liverpool. New York: Carter & Brothers. These addresses are given in simple words and in simple style. There is a more frequent use of "dear children" than suits our taste, but, then, tastes will differ.

The Parsonage in India. By the author of "Three Christmas Eves." Adapted from the German by Mrs. Cornelia M'Fadden. Cincinnati: Walden & Stowe. New York: Phillips & Hunt. A capital missionary story that will be sure to interest all who read it.

Whisper Songs for July.

FIRST LESSON.

Who will love me, keep me,
When in grief I sigh?
God, our loving Father,
Hears each bitter cry.

SECOND LESSON.

Who will come to help me
In my sore distress?
"Trust me to deliver,
I will save and bless."

THIRD LESSON.

Who is always with me
When I wake or sleep?
God, our shield and shelter,
Little ones doth keep.

FOURTH LESSON.

Who will lead me, lead me,
In the narrow way?
God will be our Leader
If we but obey.

FIFTH LESSON.

Who can gently open
This dark heart of mine?
God can touch and fill it
With his light divine.

LESSONS FOR 1881.

Third Quarter.

- July 3. *Israel in Egypt*.....Exod. 1. 1-14.
10. *The Coming Deliverer*.....Exod. 2. 5-15.
17. *The Call of Moses*.....Exod. 3. 1-14.
24. *Moses and Aaron*.....Exod. 4. 27-5. 4.
31. *Moses and the Magicians*..Exod. 7. 8-17.
Aug. 7. *The PASSOVER*.....Exod. 12. 1-14.
14. *THE RED SEA*.....Exod. 14. 19-27.
21. *THE MANNA*.....Exod. 16. 1-8.
28. *THE COMMANDMENTS*.....Exod. 20. 1-11.
Sept. 4. *THE COMMANDMENTS*.....Exod. 20. 12-21.
11. *IDOLATRY PUNISHED*.....Exod. 32. 26-35.
18. *THIRD QUARTERLY REVIEW.*
25. *TEMPERANCE LESSON*.....1 Cor. 9. 22-27.

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